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Palestinians Shocked by Qawasmeh's Assassination

Two unidentified men shot and killed Fahd Daoud Qawasmeh in Amman on December 29. The 45-year-old PLO Executive Committee member and head of the PLO's Occupied Land Affairs Department was assassinated near his home on Acre street at 2:30 pm. The killers shot him in the chest using guns equipped with silencers. He was then transferred to the nearby Palestine Liberation Army Hospital where he died immediately. The assassination was received with shock and protest by Palestinians everywhere. The city of Hebron and the rest of the occupied territories was in mourning over Qawasmeh's death (see separate story page 2).

Yasir Arafat and other PLO officials blamed Syria for the attack. The Kuwaiti daily *Al Anba* reported January 2 that the four people arrested on charges of committing the assassination revealed information holding Syria responsible for the act. The paper reported that PLO charges against Syria were based on the interrogation.

The PLO issued a statement in Amman mourning Qawasmeh. The statement called Qawasmeh a prominent figure in the Palestinian national struggle in the occupied territories and said that was why Israel deported him in 1980 and plotted his assassination. After he was deported, Qawasmeh played an important political and informational role, touring countries worldwide and winning international support. The statement added: "Those who killed Qawasmeh will never escape the hand of justice. They aimed to strike Palestinian cadres and leaders as part of their scheme to liquidate the Palestinian revolution."

News agency correspon-

dents reported that the killers first threw a grenade but when it failed to explode they shot Qawasmeh in the chest. Eyewitnesses said Qawasmeh's 15-year-old son ran to his father and transferred him to a hospital 200 metres away from their home.

Medical sources said four bullets hit Qawasmeh in his chest, thigh and leg, and he died before any operation could be performed to save his life. A Jordanian news agency employee, Shafiq Ebedat, and his wife driving in the area were also wounded but were later released from hospital after receiving first aid treatment. According to Jordanian sources, they were wounded in an attempt to chase the killers.

Qawasmeh's family and friends tried in vain to convince the Israeli authorities to allow the body of the Hebron mayor to be buried in his hometown. At one time Israeli military authorities appeared to be leaning towards allowing the request but it later turned out that the Israelis had placed a high price tag on such permission. A number of Israeli members of Knesset, officials and newspapers supported the family's request. MKs Mohammad Miar, Mattityahu Peled (PLF), Meir Vilner, Tawfiq Toubi (Rakah), Yossi Sarid (Ratz) as well as Minister-without-Portfolio Ezer Weizman all called on the government to adhere to the family's wishes. Weizman — who was responsible for Qawasmeh's deportation in 1980 — was quoted as saying that he was a "moderate."

The Israeli condition which was apparently relayed through Qawasmeh's family was that the

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Arson at Nablus District Court Destroys Thousands of Legal Documents

A fire swept through two rooms in Nablus District Court December 20 burning thousands of files and court documents dated as far back as 1936. Local Palestinian lawyers demanded that a special committee of inquiry be set up to investigate the incident.

At a press conference at Jerusalem's National Palace Hotel January 2, representatives of the Arab Lawyers Committee, an association of working Arab lawyers in the occupied territories, demanded that an "impartial and high-ranking investigative com-

mittee be set up to expose the identity of the perpetrators of the fire." ALC head Ali Ghulian said the proposed committee of inquiry should be established in a manner that would prevent intimidation by land dealers and powerful Israeli companies like that experienced by Arab courts.

According to the lawyers, the Israeli military government has a bad record in investigating Israeli frauds against Arabs. They cited two previous incidents of arson of legal documents in Bethlehem and in Jenin two years ago which remain unresolved and

unexplained by the military government. The government also never cared to investigate many other fraud cases in which land dealers sold Arab land to Israelis illegally, they said.

Unknown saboteurs broke open the front entrance to the Nablus courthouse around 4:00 am December 20, went straight to a room where legal documents were stored, and set the room on fire. The assailants also set fire to the clerk's office. Curiously, all files concerning criminal cases remained intact.

A statement issued by the

ALC asserted that the circumstances surrounding the arson of the 13,000-15,000 files of disputed legal rights cases make the military authorities a suspect in the case. It said that although the courthouse is located on a main road near a police station and a border guards' post, no one paid attention to the fire which blazed undiscovered for three hours. It also said that another foiled attempt to break into the courthouse a month ago

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Mourners at the Nahr al-Khaled Hotel giving condolences to the Qawasmeh family.

Occupied Territories Grief Qawasmeh's Death

Palestinians in the occupied territories expressed grief, shock and anger at the December 29 assassination of Fakhri Qawasmeh in Amman. They showed their sympathy for and solidarity with the family of the slain mayor by staging a simulated funeral, demonstrating in Hebron, Ramallah and Nablus, and visiting the Qawasmehs' Hebron home to offer condolences.

Two hours after the assassination, political activists began preparations in various towns in the West Bank. The next day, December 30, a general strike was observed in most villages and towns. Hundreds of leaflets calling on people to strike were distributed. Residents received the news about Qawasmeh in astonishment. At first they did not believe TV and radio reports. About 1000 students from the Hebron university and the Polytechnic went into streets December 30 and shouted slogans condemning the enemies of the Palestinian people who plotted the assassination. Israeli soldiers dispersed them and shot fire in air. In Ramallah and Bethlehem demonstrators carried two symbolic coffins.

Tens of thousands of Palestinians from all over Palestine visited the mourning house in Hebron. The visitors — representing various institutions, charitable societies, universities, newspapers, unions, student councils, vocational centres, and religious institutes and various churches — delivered speeches at the house in which various topics related to the assassination were discussed. Qawasmeh was praised for his nationalism and commitment and for his achievements in Hebron when he served as mayor. A poem entitled "A State of Shock" was presented by Said al-Ghazali.

Local newspapers published hundreds of ads written by national figures, lawyers, journalists, doctors, professionals workers, political activists and unionists. They strongly condemned the assassination and its perpetrators. The Arab Journalists' League issued a statement in which they condemned the killers and explained that the assassination aimed at creating a split in the PLO. The statement affirmed that this aim will never be achieved and that Palestinian

unity will be maintained. The killers were termed "enemies of the Palestinian people." Inside the "green line," the Abna al-Balad movement and the Progressive List for Peace issued similar statements.

Israeli troops dispersed a peaceful march January 1 in Hebron. Over 5000 Palestinian residents carried a symbolic coffin, wreaths, and hundreds of photos of the mayor and began their march from the Qawasmeh home at Nahr Khaled Hotel to the cemetery. When they approached the municipal council building, soldiers ordered them to disperse. The demonstrators refused and soldiers responded by shooting tear gas bombs and arresting demonstrators.

Residents showed their anger at the assassination by demonstrating and stoning Israeli soldiers. In an attempt to contain the Palestinians' anger, Israeli troops made preemptive arrests and detained scores of residents.

A delegation from Hebron and the West Bank went to Amman to participate in the funeral.

Palestinians Shocked

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PLO return the bodies of four Israeli soldiers who disappeared during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

The Israeli authorities have never allowed the bodies of locally born Palestinians connected with the PLO to be buried in their homeland in the past. The last such rejection came after the assassination of PLO representative Issam Sartawi.

Immediately after the news of the assassination broke, Yasir Arafat, who was in South Yemen at the time, went to Amman with Khalil Wazir, Salah Khalaf, Rafiq Natshe, Sheikh Abdel Hamid Sa'eh, and other PLO Executive Committee members to offer condolences to the Qawasmeh family. Arafat then went to the PLO office in Amman where he received condolence telegrams from prominent Arab figures. Relatives of the slain mayor affirmed that the Palestinian march will continue until Palestinian objectives are achieved.

Thousands of Palestinians participated in the funeral December 31. Qawasmeh was buried at Um al-Horan in Amman. Several prominent speakers mourned Qawasmeh. Arafat gave a speech praising Qawasmeh for his struggle against Israeli occupation. He described the killers as traitors and mercenaries: "They attempted to strike at the PLO and paralyse its institutions." The Palestinian people will never forgive the killers, Arafat said. He strongly condemned the assassination and accused Syria of plotting it. Sheikh Abdel Hamid Sa'eh, Chairman of the Palestine National Council (PNC), said "Fakhri Qawasmeh is an Arab martyr; however, he was killed by Arab hands." Abdel Nabi Natshe, the dismissed deputy mayor of Hebron, spoke about Qawasmeh's role in Hebron. Dr. Mohammed Abu Gharbieh delivered a poem mourning Qawasmeh. Ali Qawasmeh delivered a speech on behalf of his

family. He thanked all those who condemned the assassination and offered condolences.

Qawasmeh's body was then transferred from the Jordanian University hospital to the university mosque where Sheikh Abdel Hamid Sa'eh performed the noon and the funeral prayers. Covered by a Palestinian flag, Fakhri Qawasmeh was buried in Um al-Horan.

The factions of the Democratic Alliance (The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine — DFLP, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine — PFLP, the Palestinian Communist Party, and the Palestine Liberation Front) issued a joint statement in Damascus strongly condemning the assassination. The PFLP affirmed its rejection and condemnation of the political assassination. The Democratic Front spokesperson described the crime as irresponsible and treacherous.

Qawasmeh was born in Hebron on April 13, 1939. He graduated from secondary school in Cairo. He received his MA at the Agricultural College in Cairo in the 1960s. In the 1976 municipal council elections in the West Bank, he chaired the National bloc which won all seats. He served as Mayor of Hebron for the next four years.

In 1980, however, Qawasmeh was deported with Mohammed Hassan Milhem, the mayor of Halhoul. After being deported he traveled widely and proved to be a skilled negotiator and an excellent public relations man.

He tried to return to Hebron but Israeli authorities would not grant him permission. On December 22, he was accepted as a member in the Palestine National Council and elected to the PLO Executive Committee, where he was chosen to chair the Occupied Land Affairs Department. He was described as a practical, straightforward man. The slain mayor is survived by a daughter and four sons: Sahar, 22, who studies medicine in the USSR; Kahled, 20, who studies engineering in the USSR; Omar, 18; Moaweh, 13; and Moamar, 6.

New Hopes for National Unity Efforts

Hopes that South Yemen and Algeria will soon renew their efforts to reconcile differences between PLO factions were revived this week by PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat's visit to South Yemen on December 27 and by a statement on December 26 from the Kuwait-based Independent Palestinian Committee for Comprehensive National Talks.

Arafat arrived in Aden from Amman, Jordan, where he spent five days holding talks with Jordanian officials and attending Palestinian committee meetings. Arafat's visit to Jordan resulted in the formation of a special Palestinian-Jordanian committee to discuss joint strategy on the Middle East conflict. He was invited by Yemeni President Ali Nasser Muhammad to come to Aden to discuss unity within the PLO. This is the first

time Arafat has visited South Yemen since his departure from the north Lebanese city of Tripoli one year ago.

In Kuwait, Palestinian officials representing all major PLO groups and independents signed a petition urging unity within the umbrella organisation and rejecting any attempt to create an alternative PLO. The petition called on all parties who signed the Aden-Algiers agreement on July 1984 to abide by the articles of the agreement concerning inter-Palestinian relations.

Jeannine AbuKhater

AL FAJR staff congratulate colleagues Maher and Lesly Abu-Khater on the occasion of the birth of their daughter, January 2, 1985.

Lebanese Attack Israeli Army, Settlements

More than 30 Israeli and South Lebanon Army (SLA) soldiers were killed or wounded in more than 17 armed attacks in south Lebanon between December 21 and January 2. Israeli troops intensified search and arrest campaigns in south Lebanese towns, villages and refugee camps.

The most serious attack occurred on January 2 near the village of Shabriha in the Tyre area. The BBC, quoting Lebanese government reports, said that at least 20 Israeli soldiers were killed or wounded in two successive explosions against an Israeli armoured convoy.

In Israel, a military spokesperson announced that four soldiers were wounded in a bomb explosion outside the village of Shabriha. The Israeli report said that after the bomb explosion, commandos opened fire on the soldiers who survived the blast.

On the same day, an Israeli military spokesperson reported that a roadside bomb exploded as an Israeli military convoy passed near the village of Sarafand, in the Nabatiyeh region, without causing any casualties.

One of the most serious military operations against Israeli targets in recent weeks, however, was the shelling of Israeli settle-

ments in the Galilee panhandle on Wednesday morning, January 2. According to reports by the Lebanese Progressive Socialist Party radio station, Voice of the Mountain and the Mounbitoun-run Voice of Arab Lebanon, smoke and flames covered the skies of Kiryat Shmonah and Metuliah settlements after they were attacked with Katyusha rockets. The reports also said that ambulances were seen moving around in the settlement. The Israeli authorities did not admit the attack, but Israeli warplanes were later reported to have flown reconnaissance missions over south Lebanon.

Dheisheh Wins Quarry Case

After 15 sessions in more than three years, Ramallah district court ruled December 22 in favour of 12 plaintiffs from Dheisheh refugee camp who filed suit against an Israeli quarry, the Jerusalem Quarry, operating near the camp.

The court ruled that "due to the health hazards caused by the company's quarries to the plaintiffs in their everyday living, health and homes... it was decided that this hazard be immediately removed by discontinuing the company's work in the Dheisheh camp area, dismantling all its machines and moving them away from that location."

The decision, a victory for Dheisheh refugees, is the second by the Ramallah court against the same company. In May 1982, the district court issued its first ruling on the same suit, which was filed in October 1981. The 1982 ruling also ordered the

company to shut down.

The company appealed the case but it was returned to the Ramallah district court. Following testimony by health protection experts, physicians and engineers, the court issued its second ruling. The company is planning to appeal once again. It's expected to take several more years before a decision is reached. Meanwhile, work at the quarry will continue as usual.

According to the testimony of the company's manager, Yusef Moyal, the company sprayed the area with water to prevent dust from polluting the environment. This, however, did not solve the problem since health experts and a Dheisheh camp physician have testified that several residents of the camp, who had been exposed to the dust in the air, have shown poor health conditions, mainly respiratory problems and cancer.

In his ruling, Judge Fawzi Ghalit, said that in addition to the hazardous health situation, the use of explosives in the quarry had damaged several homes. He said the explosions shake the earth causing cracks in camp homes nearby. With time, the judge said, the houses may fall, seriously endangering residents.

The stone-cutting company moved to the Dheisheh area in 1972. Before that it was located in an Israeli neighbourhood of Jerusalem but had to move following complaints by the residents.

The Dheisheh Youth Social Centre, which followed the court case from the beginning, expressed, in a newspaper ad December 24, its delight over the decision. The centre strongly urged the Israeli military to carry out the court decision "without any stalling or hesitation in order to save the lives of 10,000 refugees."

Jiftlik Farmers Appeal to Red Cross



Jiftlik farmers outside Jerusalem's Red Cross office. /A/O

Over 100 Palestinian migrant farmers held a sit-in at the Jerusalem offices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on December 28 to protest Israeli measures to force them to evacuate the Jiftlik area in the Jordan Valley. Their seasonal homes were bulldozed at the beginning of this winter's agricultural season and they were warned to return to their hometowns of Tubas and Tammoun in the Jenin district.

Over 40 farmers were summoned to the office of the military governor in Jericho and handed notices to evacuate their homes in preparation for demolition this month. Israeli military authorities demolished 120 temporary farming shacks in two demolition campaigns November first and fifth on pretext that they were not licensed. "Since then we have been forced to sleep in the open," Jiftlik farmer Ziad Yasser told *Al Fajr*.

A member of the agricultural aid committee, Issam Adeeab, outlined the demands of Jiftlik farmers: 1. farmers must not be forced to vacate and demolish their homes; 2. orders to them to do so must cease; and 3. farmers should be provided with the minimum standard of living. Adeeab accused landowners of not working hard enough to fight Israeli plans to seize the

land for new settlements in the agriculturally rich valley. Adeeab asked why lawyers didn't file a complaint to the Israeli High Court to issue an order nisi against the demolition. "It seems to me," he continued, "that the landowners have no intention of confronting Israeli authorities seriously."

Ramallah advocate Aziz Shehadeh told *Al Fajr* the problem is that farmers have not been given licenses. Officials in the civil administration promised to allocate land in the area and to issue licenses for farmers to build their seasonal houses, but thus far they have not. Shehadeh wrote to the authorities on December 4 listing demands of farmers and landowners who possess land deeds. Asked about the issue of demolishing shacks, Shehadeh said it is not an important issue because they are only huts and shacks.

The strikers at the Red Cross office told *Al Fajr* they have lived in these shacks since 1948 and, since then, the area was never organised or supplied with any kind of services. Ziad Yasser told *Al Fajr* that most farmers are unable to travel 40 kilometres every day. Furthermore he said, vegetable farming requires round-the-clock attention.

Protests Mark Fatah Anniversaries, Qawasmeh

Israeli police rounded up Arab workers and shoppers in West Jerusalem after a large homemade explosive charge was discovered near the Israeli municipal building January 1. Israeli troops were on alert last week in order to counter any demonstrations after the assassination in Amman of Fatah al-Qawasmeh and the twentieth anniversary January 1 of the founding of Fatah.

A two-kilogramme bomb attached to a primitive timing device was found hidden in a bag near a water fountain in a public garden on Jaffa road. Police arrived on the scene immediately after the bomb was discovered. They closed off the area and rounded up Arabs who happened to be nearby. Meanwhile police sappers used remote-controlled robots to defuse the bomb.

Earlier in the day, a small explosive charge went off near Jaffa Gate without causing any

casualties or damage.

On the same day in Gaza, a grenade was thrown at an Israeli military vehicle while it was driving on al-Wihdeh street in central Gaza. The grenade exploded, wounding a middle-aged Arab resident, Shaker Abu Shamaleh, who happened to be walking by. The wounded man was transferred to hospital with middling injuries. An Israeli military spokesman said no Israelis were hurt.

Elsewhere in the West Bank and Gaza, military patrols were dispatched in major cities to quell any possible demonstrations. There were no serious confrontations except for the clashes in Hebron.

One day earlier, Israeli Radio reported that an Israeli passenger train was stoned on the evening of December 31 as it passed near the Arab village of

Battir in the Bethlehem district. The radio said that some windows of one of the carriages were broken, but there were no injuries. Israeli troops later combed the village and arrested two youths for questioning. Earlier in the week, a curfew was imposed December 28 on the villages of Aboud and Deir Abu Mish'el, northwest of Ramallah, after unidentified gunmen shot and wounded an Israeli truck driver near Aboud. Israeli Radio reported that four bullets were fired at the driver from close range (about 50 metres). He was transferred to hospital.

Large numbers of soldiers combed the area but no arrests were reported.

In Nablus, one Israeli soldier was injured December 30 when the bus he was riding in was stoned as it made its way through the city.

Peres Spends Christmas Eve in Bethlehem

Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres attended Christmas eve ceremonies in Bethlehem at the invitation of the city's mayor, Elias Freij. It was the first visit ever by an Israeli prime minister to the occupied city of Bethlehem for Christmas ceremonies.

According to residents of Bethlehem, security during Peres' visit was heavy and shops in the Manger Square area were ordered to close early. The building in which the cocktail party in Peres' honour was given, was strictly patrolled and all streets leading to it were brightly illuminated.

Peres had been expected to speak at the party on Jordanian-Israeli dialogue but the text he gave mentioned only coexistence between Arabs and Jews

both in the occupied territories and Israel. The speech by Freij concentrated on peace in the area.

Local observers say the Israeli prime minister's visit to Bethlehem may signify a change in the status of the occupied territories toward formal annexation.

Israeli officials tried to downplay the visit. According to a *Jerusalem Post* report, December 25, Peres wanted to attend midnight Mass at the Church of the Nativity but was talked out of it after Israeli officials in the "civil administration" in the West Bank feared that his presence at the Christian site "would be interpreted as a change in the status quo regarding the holy places in the (occupied)

territories."

Also present at the party were the mayors of nearby Beit Sahour and Beit Jala, the appointed mayor of Jericho and a few other Palestinians. Many Palestinian invitees from Bethlehem and the rest of the West Bank boycotted the party.

Bethlehem residents complained of the security measures imposed during Peres' visit. Several local residents were ordered out of Manger Square during the ceremonies, presumably because of their nationalist, political views. Border guards were seen on every street and on rooftops throughout the city. Palestinian Christians who went to Manger Square were body searched while non-Palestinians were allowed free access.

Palestinians Protest Planned UNRWA Cuts

In the West Bank and Gaza, Palestinian employees of the international relief organisation strongly protested the budget cuts, particularly the decision to cancel their annual salary increases which were due January 1, 1985. The Union of UNRWA Teachers in the West Bank issued a statement December 28 expressing deep concern over the recent measures. The statement charged that these measures are "another step by members of the Western bloc to liquidate (the Palestinian refugee problem) systematically by not meeting their obligations to UNRWA's budget."

The teachers' statement warned the cuts come at a time when the economic situation in the occupied territories is worsening, forcing residents to migrate in search of better living conditions. The statement also

hinted that the cuts coincide with the implementation of an agreement reached several months ago between UNRWA employees and administration which was supposed to go into effect at the beginning of 1985.

Employees of UNRWA training centres in Ramallah sent a similar protest letter to the agency's headquarters in Vienna December 30. The letter warned, "Such a decision... will have negative consequences on the role (the training centres) have played in educating and qualifying refugee children."

Both statements urged UNRWA to continue efforts to resolve its budget problem without hurting Palestinian beneficiaries. They called on local and international organisations to pressure UNRWA's commissioner-general to cancel the recent measures.

"Greens" Criticise Israel's Occupation Policy

Members of the German "Greens" party on a fact-finding mission in the Middle East ended their two-week tour of the Middle East with a press conference in Israel during which they strongly criticised Israel's occupation policy. The Greens members started their Middle East trip in Lebanon where they visited Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut and in the south. They then visited Syria and Jordan. In Amman they met PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat and Jordanian officials.

The German delegation crossed the bridge to the West Bank on December second. One member, Brigitte Heinrich, was not allowed to enter Israel and was forced to leave her delegation and return to Amman. She was described by Israeli officials as being sympathetic to the PLO and a "terrorist." Heinrich was previously convicted of arms dealing in West Germany.

The remaining five members of the Greens delegation spent five days in Israel and the occupied territories, where they met with Palestinian representatives and Israeli opponents of the military occupation. The delegation was accompanied in Israel by MK Matityahu Peled from the Progressive List for Peace. The Israeli government, however, refused to meet the delegation. During a visit to a Knesset session December 26, a scuffle occurred between members of the right-wing Tehiya party and Tawfik Toubi of the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (Rakah). When Toubi had tried to remove a Tehiya placard charging the Greens of being Nazis, Tehiya members literally pushed him away. The Greens delegation then walked out of the session.

In the West Bank, the delegation visited Dheisheh refugee camp and Hebron where they met with Palestinian representatives. They received a first-hand



Members of the "Greens" delegation meeting Palestinians at Jerusalem's National Palace Hotel /AO

look at Israeli settlers' actions in Arab areas and their continuous provocations of Palestinian residents. They met with representatives of the Israeli Committee for Solidarity with Bir Zeit University and the "There is a Limit" movement. The delegation also visited Nazareth and Um al-Fahm.

One of the Greens delegation members, Muhammad Zaki Azazmeh, is a Palestinian born in Jaffa and a representative of the Committee for Foreign Affairs in the Party and in the European Parliament. In an interview with *Al Fajr* Arabic daily on December 27, Azazmeh explained that although the Greens Party originally started as an environmentalist group, it developed to express concern for the rights of all peoples to self-determination. As a result, he said, the Greens support the Palestinians in their struggle for statehood under the leadership of the PLO. He said the "tragedy of the Lebanese and Palestinian people and the depth of the suffering they are going through" was evident to the delegation when they visited refugee camps in Beirut and south Lebanon. At a Tel Aviv press conference December 30, delegation head Jürgen Reents

criticised the Foreign Ministry for distorting the visit, especially concerning a trip to the Israeli Holocaust memorial, *Yad Vashem*. The Press reported they would not visit the memorial; in fact they spent three hours there. He also criticised the Israeli press for spreading false information about the delegation and accusing them of being anti-semitic. A column in *The Jerusalem Post* December 26 by the newspaper's Bonn correspondent said "Motivation and membership (in Greens) are partly derived from former communist, pro-PLO and anti-Israeli circles." On the contrary, Reents stressed that the Greens party is opposed to neo-Nazism and its platform, while recognizing Germany's history of fascism, is dedicated to preventing its re-emergence.

Reents said he and the other delegation members came to the Middle East with two things in their minds: Israeli withdrawal from all occupied territories and the Palestinians' right to self-determination and to establish an independent state. He said their visit had only strengthened this belief and made them more determined to continue pressing for these goals.

Kahane's Parliamentary Immunity Curtailed

A decision by the Israeli Knesset on December 25 restricting the movement of MK Meir Kahane, was put to the test the next day when the militant racist attempted to enter the Arab village of Taibeh, in the Triangle, to threaten residents with eviction and exile.

Kahane reconfirmed his intention to go to Taibeh after his Knesset colleagues, favored lifting his parliamentary immunity from movement limitations. When he arrived at Kufir Sababus station on December 26, on his way to Taibeh, police stopped him and a group of his followers and ordered them to go back.

Meanwhile, Taibeh's local council headed by Abd al-Latif Habib was preparing to confront Kahane and his cohorts, in case they broke into the village. The council had earlier decided to indirectly confront Kahane's pro-

vocations by contacting the police, other anti-racist groups and moving public opinion against the proposed visit.

The New York rabbi, head of the ultra-rightist Kach movement which won a Knesset seat in the July elections, is leading a militant campaign against Palestinians in Israel and the occupied territories to expel them from their homes. His provocative behaviour which caused turmoil in several Arab areas in the northern region, led two Knesset members, Yossi Sarid of the Citizen Rights Movement and Edna Solodar of Alignment, to ask for the vote putting limits on Kahane's movement.

Following eight sessions, the special Knesset committee set up to consider the request, with Micha Reiser from Likud as chair, decided to recommend that Kahane's parliamentary im-

munity be curtailed. The full Knesset then voted in a secret ballot on the recommendation with 58 in favour and 36 opposed. Twelve Likud members, including all four of the National Religious Party and the four Shas members, absented themselves from the voting. Kahane left the Knesset before the ballot was cast and after promising to continue with his campaign regardless of the vote.

Speaking at the Knesset, Sarid compared Kahane's request for laws against the Arab population to those of Nazi Germany against Jews. Meir Vilner, from the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality, said the recommendation is only partial and that the Knesset should pass a law on the issue of racism in general. He said Kahane's anti-Arab actions resemble those of Nazis against Jews.

Um al-Fahm Lawyer Released

Lawyer Hussein Abu Hussein was released on bail December 23 after 18 days of detention on what he called "unjustified political and criminal charges." Abu Hussein, a well-respected lawyer in Um al-Fahm in the Triangle, heads the Committee for Developing Culture and Education in the Arab sector, which pioneered efforts to establish an Arab university in the Galilee. He was arrested on charges of leading a group which shot at some Arab houses in the village and in the Triangle.

Israeli police arrested Abu Hussein's older brother, Yousef, 52 on December 24 on charges of "disrupting the interrogation." The lawyer said that he had no idea on what the police accusation of his brother was based. Yousef, who served more than 30 years in the education sector, was remanded for 10 days. Hussein Abu Hussein said he believes that his brother's detention, like his own, was intended as harassment for his political activities.

The decision to release Abu Hussein on bail was issued by the magistrate court of Khedaira after the Israeli High Court issued a legal opinion that the evidence was insufficient to present a charge sheet.

Abu Hussein, 32, had to submit his passport to police before they would release him. He said he was held until 8:00pm at Khedaira police station until his family brought the passport.



Advocate Hussein Abu Hussein

Hussein said he believes his detention and the media campaign in the Hebrew press was intended as punishment for his political activities. He said Israeli authorities intended to transmit the message to Arab residents that they can harass anyone no matter what his position. He was certain that the Israeli authorities do not have any concrete evidence against him, he said, and if they press charges, they would only expose their own tactics.

Abu Hussein was arrested at his office on December 6 and taken to the Wadi A'arah police station. Police searched his office and confiscated some books and magazines available everywhere in the West Bank and in Israel. The lawyer said. Police also briefly detained his brother and partner in the legal offices, Saleh, on charges of possessing a calendar decorated with a Palestinian flag.

MKs, Settlers Light Hanukka Candles in Nablus and Dheisheh

In clear provocation to Palestinian residents, militant Israeli settlers, supported by former government officials, lit candles December 25 on the Jewish Hanukka holiday in front of Dheisheh refugee camp and in the heart of the West Bank town of Nablus.

Five members of the Israeli Knesset from the ultra-right Tehiya party arrived in Nablus Christmas day with scores of Jewish settlers. They proceeded to the centre of the West Bank's largest city, which soldiers had closed off. The soldiers prevented the settlers from entering but allowed admittance to the five MKs who proceeded with a cere-

monial lighting of candles for the week long Jewish holiday.

At Dheisheh refugee camp, on the outskirts of the city of Bethlehem where thousands of Christians were celebrating their feast, settlers joined Rabbi Moshe Levinger — who has set up headquarters outside the camp — and lit the last candle. Soldiers aided settlers by closing the camp to prevent any scuffle between residents and settlers. Dheisheh residents had been warning the military government that Levinger's unnecessary presence in front of their camp and the regular patrols by armed settlers would lead to clashes.



Settlers assembling outside Dheisheh camp in order to lighting Hanuka candles. /AO

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The Assassination of an Ambassador

Exactly one month after he was elected to the PLO's highest body, the executive committee, two still-unidentified men assassinated the popular Hebron Mayor Fahd Daoud al-Qawasmeh. Qawasmeh's murder has evoked an unprecedented protest among Palestinians in the occupied territories. For Qawasmeh was not only a political leader, a popular mayor, or a Palestinian symbol; he was also a true ambassador of the occupied territories.

After his arbitrary deportation in 1980, Qawasmeh traveled with fellow Halhoul Mayor Mohammed Milhem to all the corners of the world explaining his case and that of his people. Qawasmeh's itinerary included meetings with high officials and a number of heads of state — including President Mitterrand and US Secretary of State George Shultz — as well as foreign ministry officials in most world capitals. The United Nations also heard Qawasmeh speak, and its General Assembly passed a resolution in 1981 calling on Israel to allow the mayors to return. Since his deportation, Qawasmeh rejected the temptation to join the PLO officially as long as there was the slenderest chance for him to return to Hebron. He told friends that he would be willing to give up his mayoralty in exchange for the right to return to live in Hebron and walk along its streets.

His request, however, was turned down by the Israeli courts and the Israeli political system, despite the arrest of those responsible for the Hadassah attack and their testimony that Qawasmeh had nothing whatsoever to do with it.

Qawasmeh finally agreed to represent his people in an official capacity and was appropriately chosen to be a member of the new executive committee. His appointment as head of the Occupied Lands Department also raised hopes for a strong and effective leader to hold this sensitive post.

Before his death, Qawasmeh told friends that he planned to restructure the Occupied Lands Department. His reorganization plans were shattered by the assassin's bullet.

What Qawasmeh stood and died for, however, will not be forgotten. The overwhelming protest and dignity of all Palestinians in the occupied territories stands in tribute to the man and his beliefs.

Fahd Qawasmeh was never a member of any party or faction. He was elected to the PLO's executive committee because of his sincere representation of his people's suffering under occupation. We give heartfelt tribute to an outstanding ambassador and a tough fighter.

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The PNC in Action

by Ghassan Bishara
Our Washington, DC Correspondent

A very real Palestinian source of pleasure is to be able to gather in mass, simply that. The PNC in Jordan provided such an opportunity and opened doors that were long closed for too many who have relatives in Jordan. Another source of pleasure was simply holding the PNC despite serious and powerful forces working against it. Many present assumed that a session wouldn't have been called had there been a doubt that a quorum was certain to attend. They were satisfied that a meeting was held and that it was as legal, according to the governing rules, as they come.

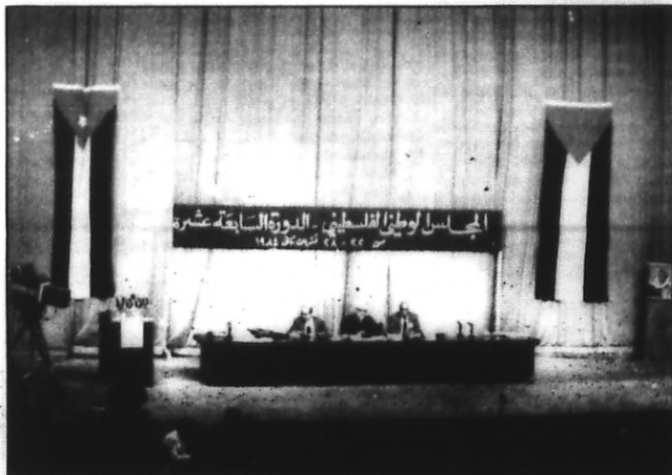
For a long time it was believed that divisions within the PLO and the interference of Arab governments might prevent the PNC from being held altogether. If it weren't held, the theory went, the PLO might simply disappear and those who didn't want it to continue working on behalf of the Palestinians would have succeeded. Tension was high when Vice President Saleem Zannoun began calling the names of those in attendance.

To many who did attend, the mere fact of holding the PNC legally was a great victory. The proof of the legality or illegality of the 17th session was spelled out in public in front

a few minutes and almost everyone took part. The final count of those present was 257 from among all ranks of the Palestinian people and PLO factions. The quorum (*nisab* in Arabic) acquired a new significant meaning in Palestinian political experience.

In order to grasp the mechanics of PNC politics, one must first understand how members are elected. The PLO by-laws provide that PNC members be elected by the Palestinian people. Article 5 regarding the PNC reads "Members of the PNC are to be directly elected by the Palestinian people, in accordance with a special rule set by the PLO Executive Committee." As Palestinians don't live in their own country where a popular election could be held, a unique formula was devised to deal with the unusual circumstances of Palestinian existence.

PNC members are divided into three major categories: Independents — 152, PLO factions — 203, and Military Council — 29, totalling 384. The independents come from all walks of life and become members when their names are proposed and voted by a two-thirds majority of PNC members. Each of the PLO factions is then granted a number of seats in the PNC and chooses its members by general caucus of its faction. The dismissal of members from any of the factions is thus the sole decision of that particular faction. By a majority vote Fatah dismissed those PNC members who took



"To many who did attend, the mere fact of holding the PNC legally was a great victory."

of television cameras: When the count ended, none of those in the hall had any doubt that the procedure was fully legal and those watching it on TV and listening to radios had no reason to disagree.

The basic rule of the PNC is that a quorum of members must be in attendance to make a session legal. There are 284 members in the PNC, and the number needed for a quorum is two-thirds of that, or 256. Since six members have died since the last PNC session in Algiers, and three members under Israeli occupation south Lebanon were prevented from attending, 249 became the magic number for a legal session.

Most people had paper and pens to keep up with the Vice President's rollcall. Watching the rollcall, a Lebanese journalist who works in the Gulf commented that what he was watching was in fact a revolution, especially in the context of Middle Eastern politics. The tension built as each member's name was called. Those who were present said so when their names were called. The vice president announced the absences. As the number approached the magic 249 the tension escalated. Two hundred forty eight, forty nine — and suddenly a demonstration broke out in the hall with chants of Palestinian victory, in favour of independent Palestinian decision-making. The demonstration lasted for

part in the rebellion against Yassir Arafat's leadership.

There are also Palestinian unions, such as the General Union of Palestinian Women, the General Union of Palestinian Students (GUPS), the Physicians' Union, Labour Union, etc. Those unions elect their members in a general meeting, where factional quotas are applied based on the strength of each faction. Union elections are held annually and each year the names of those PNC members from among the unions change, with new members replacing those who lost their seats.

As Dr Nabil Shaath explained in a November 29 press conference in Amman, annual elections are a defense mechanism. Palestinians have had to legislate rules flexible enough to meet certain unforeseen conditions that arise in their unusual situation. Certain Palestinian activists may get killed or imprisoned, whether in Europe, Israel, or the Arab world. A quorum is required to convene the PNC legally and, for the particular union, some way had to be found to replace those who were prevented from attending due to outside interference. This reality helped to create certain measures which, though not the most democratic as Shaath observed, are more democratic than any found

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The PLO is at a Crossroad

by Afif Safieh

A skeptical observer told me on the first day of the Palestine National Council that this session was going to be 'a step ahead towards... nowhere' and that it was 'a victory within the framework of... defeat.' Such statements need no rhetorical refutation. Action speaks louder than words. Only the future can tell us whether this observer was perceptive or just cynical.

The 17th session was very emotional, and at the same time, very rational. Emotional because everybody felt so close to the homeland and yet so far away. Jerusalem was within walking distance. Yet everybody was conscious of the obstacles still to be surmounted. The messages and the names of Palestinian cities and villages, of personalities and associations from just across the Jordan River echoed in the conference room. The emotional climax was reached when Karim Khalaf's recorded voice was heard by a nostalgic and determined audience. But let us go back to reality.

1) It seems that the Palestinian people is condemned to have either unanimity but without strategy or strategy without unanimity. The 17th session of the PNC has opted for strategy. The era of the balance of indecision is

over.

2) The PLO as a political system has proved to be a constitutional democracy. But a democracy to be preserved needs democrats to protect it. This is the constant task of Palestinian public opinion in the occupied territories and in exile.

A Managerial Revolution

3) Palestinian factions are expected to observe a code of conduct compatible with the rules and regulations of the PLO. The political weight, the impact of any Palestinian party or movement, should be the reflection of the popular support it enjoys and not the reflection of its external allegiance. Arab interference on the Palestinian scene is an offense to our national dignity. Our motto was and still is: 'Let a hundred flowers blossom.' But in our own garden not in somebody else's backyard. Those who boycotted the PNC or were prevented from taking part in it are invited either to join the acting coalition or, if they choose, to become an authentic, responsible and necessary opposition. They should understand that there is no other alternative, no third way. The Palestinian people should tolerate no more violations to these 'rules of the game.' We cannot afford it any longer. Let us hope that the seats left [in the Executive Committee] for the representatives of the Democratic Alliance will not remain vacant for long.

4) The report submitted by the political committee is the best written



document that has ever emerged from a PNC meeting. The wording was carefully chosen. The language is modern and precise. It was high time to move away from empty rhetoric and exasperating verbosity. But let us admit it: we badly need a managerial revolution from within the PLO in order to face the challenges of the future. The challenges of the foes and the challenges of friends too. The PLO being a pre-governmental organisation assuming already the responsibilities of a state, Palestinian public opinion is expected to be more demanding within the activities of our institutions. Not only better crisis management

but also better social, economic and education management. Rationality and efficiency are indispensable components not only for our political survival now but also during the future negotiating challenge. We have been so long deprived of a state of our own, and it is not premature to say that we owe it first of all to ourselves to succeed tomorrow before the challenge of political sovereignty, economic development and social justice.

Afif Safieh is a lecturer at the Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium and a political advisor to PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat.

A Moral Dilemma for Jews

by Paul R. Dickman

Repeated Jewish condemnations of the PLO are morally diversionary and leave the Jewish conscience unsettled. There remain two overriding moral issues for Jews both in and outside of Israel: 1) the question of "Eretz Yisrael;" and 2) the Israeli "Law of Return."

1. *The Concept of Eretz Yisrael:* Through their protests and even through their proposals for territorial compromise, great numbers of Israelis have implicitly rejected the biblical notion of a "Greater Israel." The basic religious and moral questions posed by the proponents of "Eretz Yisrael" cannot be skirted, though, through proposals for the relinquishment or exchange of territory. The issue must be met head-on.

At the time of the Lord God's promise, recorded in passages of the Torah, there was no Islamic faith. There is no reason to presume that only the Jews of today are to be included within the scope of that promise. Surely, until the great God Yahweh can appear before us on one of our great network newscasts and electronically clarify to us the contemporary significance of His promise, any conclusions that we might draw from those passages in this regard

would be unwarranted.

We Jews are not the only people with a Holy Book, and so does it not make more sense to look to a circumscribed Israel living in concert with its Arab neighbours than to use sacred scripture blasphemously as a real estate text?

In a secular sense, "Eretz Yisrael" translates into "manifest destiny" — a 19th-century-like policy of imperialist expansion being carried out in a 20th century atmosphere of anti-colonialism. It looks upon the Arab people as so many objects to be removed or cast aside. It justifies stealth; it justifies deception.

Ultimately, there can be no middle ground on this issue. Either "Eretz Yisrael" is right, and Jews ought to, by whatever means necessary, continually seek to expand the boundary of Israel to its biblical dimensions; or "Eretz Yisrael" is wrong — and the expansion of Israel should be halted, and Israel ought to express its willingness to relinquish the occupied territories of Gaza, East Palestine and the Golan.

Begin may be a religious fanatic; Sharon, his former compatriot, may not be since he has no religion and worships no god other than violence and death. But both men can be seen as natural

outgrowths of a society and culture nurtured on the idea of an "Eretz Yisrael." (And had it been Begin or Sharon instead of Abraham, can anyone imagine that the Lord God would have made the promise in the first place?)

It is time for Eban and the other moral voices of Israel to speak to the morality of this issue — to stop finessing the matter with this or that territorial proposal; to put aside the tradition of the Kings and redeem the tradition of the Prophets; and to expose the racism and neo-Nazism buried only shallowly within the un-Jewish concept of "Eretz Yisrael."

2. *Law of Return:* According to the "Law of Return," all Jews living outside Israel are in the Diaspora and are, in absentia, potential citizens of Israel. A Jew in Chicago or New York who wishes to live in Israel, though his roots not be traceable for centuries back to the Middle East, will have little difficulty immigrating and will, upon arrival in Israel, enjoy full citizenship rights.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian Arab, who may have fled in 1948 or his off spring still may not return though his roots there go back many centuries.

Looked at in this way, it is not hard to see that, however it was originally

conceived, the "Law of Return" has become a racist doctrine for the way it discriminates against non-Jews, especially the Palestinian Arabs.

Moreover, the Law is inherently an expansionist as the concept of "Eretz Yisrael" itself. As long as Israel clings to the Law of Return, it will almost certainly seek to expand. Opponents of expansion will be politically swept away. They may ride to victory from time to time on the back of economic crises, but their victories are likely to be temporary and short-lived.

No one denies that there are persecuted Jews who have good reason to immigrate to Israel. Yet just as the moral voices within Israel can perform no greater good than to challenge the concept of "Eretz Yisrael" openly and clearly so Jews outside Israel, particularly in the United States, can perform no greater mitzvah than to urge the Israeli Jews to abolish the Law of Return and replace it with an immigration policy more equitable to Jews and Arabs alike.

Let us help repatriate people in numbers to match the trees we have planted. And let us state what we know to be true: The American Jewish community is not in the Diaspora; it is the Palestinian Arabs who are. Paul Dickman is a resident of Chicago, Illinois.

Emigration, Deterioration Threaten Jerusalem's Old City

by Daoud Kuttab

The city of Jerusalem is considered the cradle of the world's three monotheistic religions. Despite the scores of books, articles, films and TV programmes about this holy city, little is known about its inhabitants. Residents who live inside Jerusalem's walls are mostly ignored by tourists, pilgrims, writers and film producers. Although some authors are intrigued by the kaleidoscopic nature of the Old City where various denominations live, the lifestyle and problems of its inhabitants remain virtually unknown to outsiders.

Major Developments

Like most ancient cities, Jerusalem is surrounded by a high wall designed for protection from foreign enemies without and self-sufficiency within. The high walls and the heavy gates were specially tailored to protect the city's inhabitants from outside dangers. Within the walls, almost everything the city's inhabitants need is readily available. Various types of goods or services are quartered next to each other. In one corner stands a butchers' market, in another a spice shop; one sector is famous for gold finery, another for fruits and vegetables. In addition to the central markets, each residential area has a dry goods store and a fruit and vegetable shop.

This, however, is changing. The high walls of Jerusalem did not hold back the invading Israeli army with its modern arsenal in 1967. The Israeli occupation of Jerusalem differed from previous occupations in that the Israeli army took over the Old City with a clear desire to de-Palatinise the city and to Judaize it instead.

The immediate expulsion of the Magharbeh quarter residents and the demolition of their homes was one of the early signs of this policy. But the policy had a much more dangerous long term aspect — emptying the Old City of its indigenous inhabitants. This policy aims to change the Old City from a thriving residential area to a museum where tourists come to observe and snap memorial photos.

Whether through force or indirect methods, the Old City's residents are leaving the holy city and not returning. The greatest one-way migration is among the Old City's Muslim residents. Unlike Christian residents who have the protection of the powerful Christian churches, the majority of the poorer Muslims find themselves vulnerable to direct and indirect Israeli attempts to harass or expel them or to buy them out.

The emigration of Christian individuals and families, although not so attention-generating, also has dangerous consequences. Church leaders have recently been sounding the alarm as the number of Christians inside the walled city reaches an unprecedented low.

Population of Christians

The actual number of Christians living in the Old City of Jerusalem is very difficult to ascertain. The Israeli

census bureau gives the number of Christians throughout Jerusalem, with no breakdown of those living inside the walls. Figures from the various Christian denominations are not reliable. Depending on the need, church officials either inflate or deflate the numbers of their various parishes. Some local churches boast of higher figures when appealing for help from their hierarchies since many churches send aid based on the number of followers. On the other hand, at times church leaders tend to provide lower figures in order to win sympathy from support groups and project funding to bring Christians back to the Old City or at the least keep them from leaving the Holy Land.

Some of the more accurate figures can be obtained from various *mukhtars* or neighbourhood representatives rather than from clergy sources. One unconfirmed estimate is that 4500 Christians live inside the city wall.

The Armenian church — which has houses a relatively steady number of residents due to the large number of houses it owns and rents free of charge to the very poor — boasts about 1500 residents.

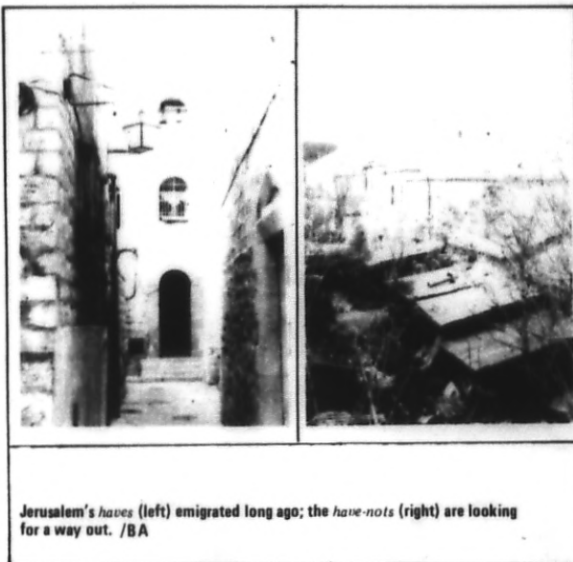
Greek Orthodox Christians, according to *mukhtars*, number only 800 today. The Greek Orthodox Church, the oldest and most traditional in the Middle East, has been reduced more than most churches as a result of conversions to other denominations (mostly to Catholicism) and apathy due to the church's rigid views and the Greek clergy's control of all important church posts. The Catholic Church, including Greek Catholics, numbers around 2000. Old City Catholics are also exiting the city to better equipped houses in Jerusalem's suburbs, and Greek Catholics and Catholics to their new housing project in Beit Hanina.

Reasons for Emigration

Church officials and Christian clergy suggest many reasons for the Christian exit from the Old City. The Christian emigration cannot be divorced from the general emigration of Palestinians due to the poor economic situation and the lack of development in the occupied territories. The unavailability of jobs for the many skilled graduates forces them to look either in the Arab world or in Europe and the United States for employment. Because of its religious significance and because of the thousands of tourists that come to Jerusalem, the Old City's residents are more vulnerable to enticements to leave the area to search for greener pastures. The Christian community, which has traditionally been involved in tourism-related business, is in constant touch with Western countries. Whether high school or college graduates, Christians of the Old City use their contacts to travel abroad and rarely return. Today Jerusalemites hold high business positions in major Arab banks, hotels, commercial enterprises, and even governments. Many have reached high academic and professional posts in the West and would find it difficult to return and accept inferior work.

Housing

In comparison to new homes being



Jerusalem's *haves* (left) emigrated long ago; the *have-nots* (right) are looking for a way out. /BA

built outside Jerusalem, the condition of old city homes leaves much to be desired. They are small, humid, lack essential luxuries like hot water and private bathrooms, and for the most part they are simply disintegrating. A major reason for this state of affairs is that many of the houses are owned by the churches. During times of war, Christians placed their homes in the trust of their respective churches for reclamation after the war. But the churches, for whom real estate is a powerful tool, have refused to return property although families have been allowed to continue to live in them. If the owners left their house, the church would rent it and pay the original owner a fraction of the fee on a yearly basis. This situation left most tenants unable and unwilling to carry out any major repairs on the homes they were inhabiting or renting.

In the Christian area in the Old City, houses are situated in small neighbourhoods called *housh*. In most cases the homes are connected by a central courtyard where families can gather. Common bathrooms are the norm and they are usually not well maintained.

Church Interference

Major churches in Jerusalem that own the majority of Christian homes use their power as landlords to control the parishes. A number of Catholics have complained that their church pressured them out of their homes when personal differences with church clergy arose. One family was forced to abandon its Old City home because it refused to disassociate itself from a family member who married a non-Christian. Another family cites a case of divorce as the source of church pressure on them to leave. The rental of empty houses is also

cause for complaint for many Catholics who believe the church shows favouritism. "The homes should be given to the poor, yet we see them given to individuals who own 1983 cars and colour TVs," said one Old City resident.

Greek Catholics also complain of the church's policy regarding real estate. According to a reliable source, the present patriarch has been refusing to rent vacant houses. The source said the church plans to use the closed homes for the Easter season when many Cypriots and Greeks come to the Old City for the Easter holidays. Until now, most of the visiting pilgrims have been housed with local Christian families who are paid US\$100 per tenant for the ten-day stay.

Delinquency

Another reason cited for the increase in emigration of Old City families is the breakdown in cultural norms. Residents say that, as a result of permeation by Israelis and tourists, the Old City has become the centre of drugs, alcoholism and adultery. They say the many hostels that have cropped up in the Old City are used by non-residents for morally unacceptable activities. Many Old City families do not allow their daughters out after dark. Residents say Israeli police turn a blind eye to most of what goes on in the Old City.

Problems facing Jerusalem's Old City residents are too many to be ignored. Most people are concerned with major political issues, but the social situation of Jerusalem's inhabitants requires long, hard study. If the serious issues are not courageously addressed, we will wake up one day with our churches, mosques, homes, and courtyards converted into tourist attractions rather than places of worship and residence.

Children of War Tour Gives Local Participants New Hope

Lesley AbuKhater spoke to two Palestinians and an Israeli who visited the United States as part of the 1984 Children of War Tour. All found the experience enlightening and came home from the tour full of new hope and determination to work together for a better future.



Danny Kuttah (left) and Yuval Shilon (right); "The goal of the tour was to make people understand what was going on around them."/RI

Out of the mouths of babes, they say, comes clear and unpretentious wisdom. Though not babes in the chronological sense, six local teenagers — three Palestinians and three Israelis — took part in an international 'children's' tour of the United States, November 6 through 26, in which they called on listeners to understand the various conflicts around the world and to work towards solving them for the goal of world peace.

The 1984 Children of War Tour, with a budget of nearly US\$96,000, was sponsored by an American interfaith, interracial coalition known as the Religious Task Force-Mobilization for Survival. The coalition — a grouping of 60 religious and peace groups — brought together 39 young people from some 15 countries in a plea to end the suffering of children from warfare and to call for peaceful coexistence. According to organizers, a statement made by a Lebanese citizen and quoted in the *New York Times* June 1, 1984 aptly explains the tour's purpose: "There will be peace when we begin to love our children more than we hate our enemies."

The six Palestinian and Israeli youths were participants along with youth from Northern Ireland, Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador, Vietnam, Cambodia, South Africa, Lebanon, Namibia and the Marshall Islands. The tour also included a number of US children representing Native Americans, Mexican Americans, Blacks and whites active in the anti-nuclear movement.

The three Israelis — chosen for their activism in the youth branch of the Civil Rights Movement (RATZ) — and the three Palestinians — brought together through the efforts of a local Palestinian lawyer — did not know one another before meeting at an organiza-

tional retreat for the tour in a New Jersey centre. There they met and discussed the issue of coexistence which they all saw as most crucial to this troubled region.

Each armed with a three-minute speech on the suffering he/she had either experienced or witnessed, the six were then divided into Israeli-Palestinian pairs and asked to join the six groups touring assigned areas of the country. In high schools, universities, churches and on talk shows, the six spoke to their American audiences on problems facing

regarding the resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Common Suffering

Children were chosen to make the peace tour, although for them "fear has become routine," said Danny, because they are more willing to forgive. "Adults fight because they feel they're totally right," he said, while, "Children are willing to forget their suffering and to make peace more easily."

The children — all from major

"The purpose of the tour was not to solve the problems in the Middle East. It was to tell people there's no reason for us to hate Arabs or for whites to hate blacks."

Yuval Shilon

the Middle East with a focus on their points of agreement rather than disagreement. As a Palestinian participant put it: "Having an argument in front of 100 people is much less beneficial than agreeing."

At Fair spoke to three of the local youth — Yuval Shilon, 15, an Israeli science student from Jerusalem; Danny Kuttah, 14, a Palestinian student from East Jerusalem; and Maysoon Ayyad, 15, a Palestinian student from Dheisheh refugee camp. They sat together and evaluated the purpose and success of the tour as well as their individual beliefs

conflict zones — came together to deplore "the fact that people don't live together, don't want to understand each other. That's a big problem all over the world," said Yuval. Desirous of peace, they came together to share their common suffering. "The way we all suffered and in some ways worked together," said Danny. "The way our people suffered," corrected Yuval.

Each youngster on the tour spoke of the conflict in his/her area and of the more common themes of peace. They encouraged the audience, said Danny, to join the peace movement, to understand

issues before voting, to realize the humanity of the enemy. "We are all human," he said. "We've all suffered and we want the suffering to stop around the world." For the audience, he said, "knowledge is the first step to peace."

Did they see themselves as representatives of their fellow Palestinian and Israeli countrymen suffering here, or was there a broader element to their message? "I saw myself and all the other people as representing the human race, as representative people who want to live together. There was an Israeli aspect to my personality," said Yuval, "but that was not the purpose of the tour."

"I felt I was representing the Palestinians," said Danny, who admitted that at first the question of representation had troubled him. An Israeli interviewer on a local talk show had asked him: "Why did they pick you instead of anyone else? What makes you unusual?" "I'm not unusual," said Danny, adding that the idea behind choosing him had not been his individual uniqueness, but his ability to represent the Palestinians as a whole.

The question of representing someone else's suffering seemed to trouble Yuval and Danny, though Maysoon, a resident of the embattled Dheisheh refugee camp, found no real difficulty in speaking first-hand of pain. Yuval, however, acknowledged that his people had suffered but was reluctant to call himself a victim of suffering. Danny, also not a direct victim of much of the region's violence, wrestled with the question. Finally, he said, "You can't wait until someone is killed to say they've suffered." Perhaps youngsters who had suffered more directly from Israeli occupation, he said, were afraid to go on the tour, afraid something worse would happen when they returned. "I first realized I haven't suffered like some of these kids have. Then I realized, how are you going to get some kid who's been tortured to talk about it when he has to come back here," Danny concluded that it was his role to speak for those who were too afraid to speak out.

Yuval, more willing to discount himself as a symbol of the Israeli population saw himself instead as more generally representative of all world citizens living in conflict zones. "I didn't see my problem as more important than the Guatemalan problem," he said. "The purpose of the tour was not to solve the problems in the Middle East. It was to tell people there's no reason for us to hate Arabs or for whites to hate blacks. I didn't feel that I was there to only speak about my problem but to bring a general message of peace."

Danny agreed to some extent when he said, "I thought the whole goal of the tour was to make more people understand what's going on around the world." But, he added, "I didn't say we should work for the whole peace of the whole world. We have to start at a certain place." Palestine was as good a place as any, he said.

Was the tour a success? "Yes, very successful," said Danny. "If someone thinks for one minute, then that's already success," he said. Maysoon agreed, though more cautiously: "Something was good because we made the people

there know more. Maybe there are people who forgot all the things we told them. But I think there are people who will feel with us. Maybe they can't do something about my problem, but they can do something about Guatemala, about Central America. And it's good to have people who agree with you, who know the truth about our country. That we don't just kill and plant bombs. It is very sad to feel there are people who are afraid of you."

Conflict Similarity

The similarity between the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and other world tensions seemed to affect the youths most. They were also moved by the knowledge that other children had suffered in much the same ways they had. Meeting all the participants was "a great emotional thing," said Yuval. "I didn't know about the situation in a lot of these places."

Danny was particularly struck by tales of children from Cambodia who had seen their whole families murdered by the Khmer Rouge, and in Northern Ireland where throwing stones at British soldiers is as common as it is here on the West Bank. "Our country's not the worst in suffering in the world," he learned, adding, though, "almost everyone was like copies of me but just from different parts of the world... so many parallels with our views and our ideas. I could go talk about myself and just use the word Ireland. It is almost identical," said Danny.

All three seemed particularly affected by the fact that the United States gives aid to all countries the children on the tour came from — countries where children's pain abounds. They cited the examples of El Salvador, South Africa and Israel; America totally supports the governments of these countries where children are suffering.

American Reaction

Yuval, Danny and Maysoon were bothered by what they perceived as ignorance on the part of their American audience. Yuval said he and Maysoon found Americans who didn't know where Israel was. When the two of them spoke together in a Jewish synagogue, both expecting the American Jewish community to be among the best informed, they were surprised when a girl asked Maysoon after the programme if the Jews in the West Bank and the Jews in Israel were fighting one another. She assumed Maysoon was Jewish. "We were in the US to inform Americans," said Yuval, but he found the basic ignorance disconcerting.

"The majority of the 39 children were people who live in very difficult situations. They are different from the American children," said Maysoon. "Politics is a very important part of their lives" unlike American children, she added. Americans, she said, "live in a good situation. They have many good things in their country. They don't want



Maysoon Ayyad and Danny Kuttah outside Dheisheh camp: "Americans tend to divide world conflicts into a war between America and the Soviet Union."/RI

to think about people who live in a bad situation... They think all the people in the world live like them. They don't care."

Danny agreed with Maysoon and told of one stop on his tour in Orange County, California, where the audience was unwilling to listen to a girl from El Salvador explain that American aid to her country was increasing the pain she and others like her suffered at the hands of their government. He said the audience was abusive and accused her of making anti-American statements.

Maysoon said Americans tend to divide every world conflict into a war between America and the Soviet Union. At a Thanksgiving demonstration in which she participated in Charlotte, North Carolina, people refused to accept the pamphlets she was distributing against US involvement in Central America. She was called a "dirty communist" by one man, she said. Danny said that during a talk show on which he and a

When asked if she found all Americans equally unresponsive to her plight, Maysoon said, "there are American people who have bad situations and they can feel with us. But the ones who have a good life, they can't imagine what it is to live in a camp. Fortunately I had a picture of the camp. I think they thought it was underground."

In her speech, she told the American audience of the racist Rabbi Meir Kahane and his attempts to expel Arabs from Palestine. She told about demonstrations against the occupation and the way that the military has closed off most of Dheisheh camp entrances with cement-filled barrels and barbed wire. She said that in spite of what she told them, she discovered Americans who thought Palestinians were all criminals and killers. "I wanted them to know that, there are Palestinians who want their rights, their land, their country. But the Americans don't know anything. They don't know where the West Bank is. They don't know what is happening everyday here."

"There are American people who have bad situations and they can feel with us. But the ones who have a good life, they can't imagine what it is to live in a camp."

Maysoon Ayyad

Palestinian-Israeli Conflict

Despite their differences on the form peace should take in the region, the three insist the most important thing to concentrate on is coexistence. "It is not something possible to make all the Jews leave the country," said Maysoon. "We are human like them and we can't do this. The PLO agrees with

this," Danny chimed in, saying, "If we tell them all to get out it is just as bad as them telling us all to get out. Whether they are supposed to be here or not they are here."

Although the theme of coexistence was central to all three none had previously experienced much interrelation between Palestinian and Israeli youth here in Palestine. Maysoon said she had never had a conversation with an Israeli youngster before she met Yuval. She didn't know any Israelis besides the soldiers stationed outside her camp. Yuval said he had played soccer with some Palestinians before but didn't have personal friendships with any before he met Danny and Maysoon. Although he and Danny live less than five minutes apart in Jerusalem, they met for the first time in the United States. Danny admitted he had expected to find more tension between him and the Israeli tour delegation. "I was expecting Israelis who weren't open-minded," he said. "I was expecting a debate. Instead, all three insisted they had found new friends."

For Maysoon, Yuval and Danny, their tour experience has relevance not only for their area, but also for the broader goal of world peace although the needs of children suffering here are foremost in their minds. "There are people here in the West Bank who want peace... and there are Israelis who want peace," says Maysoon. "It is something possible to make peace because there are people who really want it, not just speak about peace." The tour they say, helped them realize this. Most particularly, they said, the tour helped them realize their need for one another, not for America or outside interference. Maysoon said it for them: "It gave me something to work hard towards, to make peace. I saw there were no people who care in the other countries and if we don't do anything to solve our problem nobody can help us." One of the Cambodian student advisors on the tour explained the urgency of hearing the children because they, he said, "have been made hostage to the madness of adults." Yuval, Danny and Maysoon are very real representatives of the suffering of their respective nations and symbolic leaders in the Palestinian-Israeli struggle for salvation and peace.

48-Year-Old Land Battle in Tura'an Remains Unresolved

by Awad Abdel Fattah

A dispute over who owns about ten thousand dunums in the village of Turaan, near Nazareth, has been brewing between the 6500 village population and the so-called Israeli Land Administration (ILA) for the last three decades. This dispute has involved court battles and practical measures on the ground, but a final decision has never been reached. In an attempt to take over the disputed land, the ILA has violated agreements reached between the two parties and defied court orders preventing it from using the land. But the Turaan population has spared no effort or means to obstruct the ILA plan.

The exact area of the land is 9371 dunums, extending along the mountain-side where Turaan is situated. It has been worked by the people of the village for generations. Most of the land is typically mountainous and is used as grazing area. About 10 percent falls within the village's master plan, and in this section Turaan residents have continued to build new houses over the years.

Roots Of The Problem

The core of this still unresolved dispute is that the land in question was placed under the supervision of the British High Commissioner in 1937 following differences among the owners over reckoning borders. But this 'administration' did not involve confiscation of land or its takeover for public purposes. The people of the village testify that they have continued to care for their plots and to use them, and that the British supervision did not ban farmers from using such land. 'The purpose of this measure was just to prevent further fights,' one of the villagers told *Al Fajr*.

But the ILA claims that it alone has the authority to replace the High Commissioner and not the village. 'We believed,' Said Bader, deputy head of Turaan's local council remarked, 'that the local council was the only one entitled to take over responsibility for the land after the British Mandate of Palestine ended.' He added that the Israelis intend only to confiscate the land as they did with many other Palestinian lands under an assortment of excuses and pretexts.

Until 1960 the issue still had not taken the form of open dispute, and villagers who wanted to build houses on that part of the land which fell within the village master plan received construction permits. Since then, however, the issue has taken on a different direction. Almost 25 years ago, the ILA initiated a project of foresting 89 dunums of the land without even informing the local council and the owners. Families who had farmed the land quickly uprooted the intruding trees and were punished by arrest and fines.

After this escalation, Said Bader told *Al Fajr* the local council decided to act on the issue. It took a decision stating: 'Since Parcel No. 43, part of a block whose total area is 9371 dunums is registered in the name of the British High Commissioner on behalf of the village population, and in accordance with the law has become the property of the village, the local council has

decided to send letters and delegations to the relevant Israeli authorities to demand that afforestation be stopped and the whole block of land, which is vital to the village, be returned.'

During the 1960s there was no further action on the subject, nor was any definitive decision made. But harassment continued. The Israeli authorities not only prevented construction in the area involved in the dispute, but they also refused to issue building permits on the opposite side of the village facing a large plain of 11,000 dunums. 'The Israeli excuse was that the plain was not designated for construction but for agriculture,' a member of the local council told *Al Fajr*. 'But,' he added, 'this simply was not true. The Israeli authorities used this excuse as a means of pressure to force us to give up the 'disputed' land, and then to facilitate their takeover of the plain in the future.'

Despite the Israeli obstacles, new construction proceeded to edge towards the plain although some Turaan villagers were stopped by the fear of having their houses destroyed, the punishment for 'building without a permit.' But for the people who own land in the plain there were few choices left to deal with the housing crisis. Today there are tens of houses in the village built outside the designated area for construction and without licences. The Israeli bulldozers arrived in 1976 and destroyed the unlicensed house of Ahmad Sabah but still this has not stopped people from defying what they call 'the unjust and arbitrary obstacles' placed by the Israelis. All those who built without licences were heavily fined.

In the beginning of the seventies, as housing problems grew more acute for Galilee and Triangle Palestinians, a committee made up of a number of people from the village and members from the local council was formed to follow up on the issue of the disputed land. The committee met the head of the ILA office and asked him to release a part of this land until a final solution could be reached. But the ILA chief answered that if the local council relinquished the land to the ILA, the ILA would find a solution for the housing problem using the framework of the master plan. The plan, by the way, was approved only last year, 23 years after its presentation by the local council and does not reflect current needs. He even refused to release a tiny 10-dunum plot for villagers in desperate need of housing.

This rigid position was backed by the legal advisor of the ILA who told the committee that, by relinquishing the land they would hasten the solution for their housing problems. 'We are expecting the Knesset to pass a law which will allow us to own the land,' the legal advisor revealed. 'Then the problem will end without us paying anything.' No such law has been passed so far and the local council regards it as an empty threat.

The local council refused to give up the fight and resorted to Israeli court. In the session which took place in 1977, the High Court issued an order forbidding both parties, the ILA and the local council, from using the land until an agreement was reached between them through negotiations. It also stipulated that as soon as the two parties reached an agreement, the High Court would adopt and legitimise it.

In accordance with the court's

decisions, the local council, residents and their lawyer, Hanna Naqara, who died last year, began negotiations with the ILA. But the stand of the ILA was as belligerent as before and it continued to act unrestrained on the land. It used the desperation of some of the villagers for housing to extort unjust and arbitrary land exchange deals. So far 50 people have been forced to exchange land.

The conditions of exchange deals are: the ILA provides a one-dunum plot from the disputed land which is located within the village boundaries, while in return the residents must forfeit 10 dunums of their own land located outside the designated construction area. According to Said Bader, some people who don't own lands in the village area were forced to buy a 10-dunum plot from other villagers in order to exchange it for one dunum in the village to build a house.

The experience of the villagers has been that the same one-dunum plot which a resident might get through the exchange deal, is invariably located in front of his existing house, built tens of years ago or before the establishment of the State of Israel. The land has, in any event, been used by the house owner over the years. When the deal with the

Israelis is made, the one-dunum plot is still registered in the Lands Registry Department as being merely leased for 49 years, while the 10-dunum plot is registered in the name of the ILA as its own property forever. In this manner the ILA has grabbed 200 ten-dunum plots, or 20 percent of the disputed land, after the court's 1977 decision.

Said Bader told *Al Fajr* that the flagrant violation of the court's decision by the ILA and 'the rude defiance of the will of the population' provoked the people of the village into seeking legal redress.

During the follow-up of the case, the village's lawyer discovered that the registration of Parcel No. Eight, a 13-dunum tract in the *tabu* land registry was put in the name of the Jewish National Fund in 1971. 'That is,' explained Said, 'the ILA considered this land to be its property and gave it through exchange to the JNF which in turn put it at the disposal of the quasi-government land company called 'Hamnuta' to undertake other land exchange deals with villagers who suffer from a shortage of land.'

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جدور

صورة فنية لجدور، لوحة الجدارية في طبريا - ١٩٨٤



Palestine and Culture



by Said al-Ghazali

A State of Shock

Fahd Qawasmeh

By your name we inscribe your memory
on the walls of the beloved homeland
You are the martyr encircled by flames
of fire,
surrounded by martyrs who question:
Why this assassination?
How will the crowds march on without
you?

By your name we inscribed your
memory and the names of victims
Hearing your name kindles our
emotions
They will never be extinguished
Your death catalyzes us
Your life emanates within us
Your belief ramifies in us
O, Fahd Qawasmeh you are the
immortal
O, happiness of children who come after
you
Your sudden death surprises us
Your steps roar
The singers' flutes announce your
Palestinian death
This endless death
You die then resurrect then die
And resurrect, resurrect, resurrect
You are alive again in us
You dispatch your belief in us.

Fahd Qawasmeh —

The immortal Palestinian,
The bird hovering over Palestine
The ghosts fall down
Ghost after ghost
You will never fall

The wind, your voice, will never subside
The flowers and stones, your words, will
never abate
Your courageous stride will never cease
Your face, the halo, will never die.

You grant us your heart even at the last
moment
But we kill you.
We say:
O deported
Who strives to return to the mountain
of Hebron

and Nahr al-Khaled —
"You are the traitor"
Because you constructed Hebron
Because you opened its streets
Because you always come to Palestine
from everywhere
We killed you Fahd Qawasmeh
You are the returner to your home in
al-Quds and Hebron
Why this assassination?
Why?

You say:
"I am the immortal Fahd Qawasmeh
I was born in turmoil
I died in turmoil
I march on
And I grant Hebron and Galilee my
immortal face
I march on
I am Fahd Qawasmeh
I am the clear writing
My people in al-Quds, Hebron and
Galilee
I am with you on the road of
continuous struggle



March on
Raise my banner."
Fahd Qawasmeh
By your name we inscribe your memory
on
the walls of the beloved homeland
The question arises
Why this assassination?

These bullets remain entrenched
in the Palestinian body
in exile and in the homeland.
How can we extract these bullets from
the Palestinian corpse?

I am Fahd Qawasmeh
I leave my tomb and protest
I am with you on the road of
continuous struggle
March on
Do not kill me again and again
Do not shoot the Palestinian body
in exile and in the homeland
March on
I am Fahd Qawasmeh
I march on
From the beginning 'til the end of time
without pause
I grant Hebron and Galilee my immortal
face.

"I am Fahd Qawasmeh
I am the endless dawn
March on
I say my infinite words
March on
I am the everlasting time of Palestine
March on
I am the everlasting growth of Palestine
March on
I leave my tomb and protest
March on
From the beginning 'til the end of time,
I am the Palestinian eternity
without pause
March on
I am the sun whose orbit is Palestine
I am the light
March on
I am faith
March on."

A Rose in the Quagmire of Massacre

"Wahdak Thuma Tazdahem al-Hadiqa," — "You are the Unique then the Garden will Overflow," — is the title of a new collection of poems written by Ali al-Khalili, and published last November by al-Bayader printing house in Jerusalem. The 222-page volume includes 44 poems. During the last 17 years, al-Khalili has published eight collections of poetry, six studies on culture, heritage, folklore, Arab mythology and songs, two novels, stories for children, and other prose. His latest volume is reviewed by Said al-Ghazali.

After you finish reading al-Khalili's new collection, particularly the last poem entitled "Testimony of the Victim," you feel that a new spirit of optimism has been generated to reject exile, occupation, massacre, and Arab capitals of defeatism. The homeland "Palestine" is the garden that has been wrecked, but the existence of Palestinians and their struggle guarantees that the garden will bloom; the symbol of Palestine will overcome the lands of the oppressed, occupied, deported, "or people eaten by the fangs of the civilization of the collective murder," as al-Khalili says in his poetry.

Khalili said: "I insist there is a garden. It is wrecked but not abandoned. It will never be deserted. The garden means our existence in this country. 'You are the Unique' means the Palestinian people. I have a sufi's love for my land. The land is the only alternative for everything. In these poems I attempted to broaden or to go beyond the

Palestinian sphere. Other people face similar brutalities. I appeal to young poets to write about Palestine as well as South Africa, Guatemala, the tragedy of Bhopal in India. We should not confine ourselves within the name of Palestine."

"You are the Unique... then the Garden Will Overflow" is an epic and tragic song in which the poet talks about the garden of Palestinians in a language of poetry and vision, a mysterious language, but also in the language of rhetoric and revolutionary optimism. The Palestinian garden contains the territories of Palestine and the world of exile in which Palestinians live. The garden is wrecked because there is no Palestinian state and there are massacres committed against Palestinians. The poems leave you with a sense that the world is no longer a world of peace, serenity, freedom and modern civilization. The world is launching its wars and massacres and inflicting calamities on Palestinians. In his poems, Khalili gives a personal reflection, interwoven with his political stands, of the severe hardships that Palestinians have encountered. The collection presents us with no final resolution to this problem. However, it stresses the idea of struggle and raises many questions: What is the solution? Is there an end to this long massacre? The angry, sad poet wants to use everything to detonate the earth wherever he goes and he encounters all kinds of frustration and defeatism. "How are we going to be saved?" is an essential question which all Khalili's poems tackle and attempt to answer. The poems offer choices to stand firm, steadfast? Or to escape and

travel abroad? To accept reality? Or to resist against it? But the final answer is the poet's belief in the victory of the Palestinian people. The garden will be saved, he says with optimism not characteristic of his earlier works.

Khalili's poems depict all aspects of suffering in this epic tragedy in which all Palestinian men, women, children and elderly participate through action. There is no specific hero but there are collective heroes who encounter death, poverty, hunger, vagabondage, exile, sadness, killing, solitude, damnation and the harassments of occupation and of Arab regimes. The poems talk about martyrs in Nablus, Hebron, Ramallah, Lebanon, Tyre, Sidon, Beirut, Sabra, and Shatila. One eulogizes a prominent PLO figure, Issam Sartawi; another eulogizes an unknown woman, "Aziza Hussein Issa from Silwad", who was shot dead by settlers. The poet says: "She knows nothing about the Etzel group and Gush Emunim." However, both Sartawi and Aziza believed in Palestine.

In his lead poem, "You are the Unique... then the Garden will Overflow", a destroyed garden is depicted. There is no serenity; neither flowers nor roses grow; no birds fly and sing. The poet himself is unable to write, to use his fingers or to act. Whatever he writes, thinks, sees, or converses with is tragic. People walk without heads and the wall clock observes the details of the tragedy. Here is the news bulletin, there is confiscated land; here is a settlement, there is a murder. The poet is completely under the effect of his tragic and

mysterious dreams that convey tragic sensations. However, there is hope in his dreams, because there is at least one plant in the wrecked garden.

In poems about Ansar and refugee camps, steadfastness and challenge stand out. The poet's words are simple and direct. He is more optimistic and revolutionary and challenging. However, when he talks about Tripoli and when he sees the international ships that carried Palestinians floating on the Mediterranean, his tragic dreams attack him: "O... you deported man, do I see banners or gallow chains?"

In poems about land, there is confrontation between occupiers and the occupied. The land is the mother, the sister the daughter, the lover. The land is the secret of knowledge, the tongue of poets. The land is life and death. It is more valuable than individual lives. Therefore Aziza Hussein Issa, a peasant from Silwad, died when she confronted settlers who took her land. They shot her dead when she refused to leave her land. The poet imagines her soul hovers over her home in Silwad, observes her family, and participates with her granddaughter cooking on the taboun, and goes with her to school. Her soul is a tree in the garden.

The poet also talks about exile as it is part of nature and peoples' normal lives. He asks: Is the human homeland an exile? Why should I see my homeland murdered? Why is there Sabra and Shatila?

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WINDOW ON THE ARAB PRESS

The First Hundred Days

A hundred days have passed since Shimon Peres assumed power on the basis of a Labour-Likud coalition with the powerful smaller parties.

We are not interested in the domestic policies of the Israeli government unless they have consequences for us as a people living under occupation since 1967. When we review the promises of the Peres government to improve conditions in the occupied territories, we find that these promises were never fulfilled.

As for the Israeli attitude toward the Palestinian cause and peaceful tendencies, the hundred days did not bring about any move toward recognising the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. The positive moves by some Arab parties have had no effect in Israel. On the contrary, they were received with pre-meditated discouraging statements.

The impressions left by previous Likud governments and their practices against Arab residents and institutions are still the same, despite promises for change.

We do not want to justify the absence of the government's achievements for peace. No one has ever expected the promises to be fulfilled. Residents in the occupied territories do not expect the government to take serious steps toward peace because its goals are Israeli and because withdrawal from the occupied territories was never a major issue of debate during the election campaign. Lastly, the Labour-Likud government is only a transitional arrangement until one of the major parties can take over.

AL QUDS
December 22

Shultz Holds the Key

Peres says there are three major problems facing Israel. First, the number of immigrants to Israel is insufficient. Second, the population of what he calls "minorities" in Israel is increasing. Third, the economy. Peres' statement came right after George Shultz advised Israel to act quickly to solve its economic crisis.

Peres' statement and Shultz's advice are very dangerous. Peres made it clear that the increase in the "minority" popu-

lation requires quick action before it is too late.

This action was discussed by the extremist racist MK Rabbi Kahane who demanded the expulsion of all the Arabs from the country. Peres and Kahane are demanding the same thing in different ways.

The solution of the economic crisis lies with Shultz. Peres and Shultz want to stop the wheel of history. Wars and occupation are the cause of economic problems.

As for the increase in the minority population, neither Peres nor Shultz can do anything about it.

The solution is to end occupation and to abandon the policy of war.

AL SHA'AB
December 26

The Constant Contradiction

Israeli settlers in the West Bank have been active in the area between Nablus and Dheish camp. Israeli Minister of Defence Yitzhak Rabin approved of this activity by stating that he "cannot prevent the settlers from moving all over the land of Israel."

Yitzhak Rabin is not the only Labour leader who encourages settlement. Prime Minister Shimon Peres, leader of the Labour Party, renewed his rejection to a settlements' freeze and he cancelled the political role of his government.

Peres defined the three problems which he has to face as: lack of immigration to Israel; the increase of the minority population, and the deterioration of the economy. Where can one find calls for peace among these

three problems?

Peres is clearly interested in having more immigrants. This means confiscating more Arab land to absorb the newcomers. This is the constant contradiction which successive Israeli governments represent.

They call for continued occupation and they call for peace at the same time.

AL FAJR
December 27

The Greens Delegation

Israeli government officials behaved toward the German Greens delegation as if they were a disease. This Israeli attitude stems from the Greens' support of an independent Palestinian state, their recognition of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and their call for complete Israeli withdrawal from all the Arab territories occupied in 1967.

Shamir, as foreign minister, refused to receive the delegation because they support Palestinian rights.

The aim of the Greens' visit is to examine the conditions of the Palestinian people.

AL SHA'AB
December 28

On the Path of Fahd al-Qawasmeh

When Palestinian anger against the killers of Fahd al-Qawasmeh turns into deep awareness of their aims and plans, we become capable of protecting the torch of the martyr so as to isolate the killers and their criminal plans.

When we absorb our martyrs deep in ourselves we know the assassination is a failure and a mean way.

When we follow the path of Fahd al-Qawasmeh to continue his march, we prove that Qawasmeh did not fade away. And when the PLO reasserts its sacred approach by continuing to implement PNC resolutions, for which Fahd al-Qawasmeh paid with his life, his blood becomes part of this sacred pledge. It became a burning fire in the face of his killers.

AL FAJR
December 31

The Bullets that Turn us Back

We don't know whether those who fired the shots that

killed Fahd al-Qawasmeh realize that they turned back the Palestinian cause as quickly as bullets travel. But we are sure that the perpetrators know very well that such acts cause setbacks to the Palestinian cause.

Political violence cannot be used by people who have a broad popular base. The perpetrators are politically and popularly bankrupt. Having realized this fact, they do not refrain from committing such repulsive acts.

The bullets fired at Fahd al-Qawasmeh are actually directed against a large sector of the Palestinian people. The body of Fahd al-Qawasmeh was no more than a front through which they thought they could reach the Palestinian people. But they only deceive themselves. For the reactions of our people, both inside and outside, prove that we are much stronger than those who try to impose themselves on us.

Our people have realized that the achievement of their goals is possible through people who have freed themselves from fear and submission. If the killers' aim is to turn back the wheel of history, we would like to tell them that this is impossible.

AL QUDS
December 31



Merchant Calls for Chamber of Commerce Elections

A leaflet calling on the Jerusalem Arab Chamber of Commerce to dissolve itself and call for new elections, signed by Ibrahim Sabri Za'rour and "others in the trade sector," was distributed December 25 to East Jerusalem merchants.

The leaflet charged that the Chamber of Commerce has failed over the years to do its job and ended up a "private office to run private business," and a place where "some took advantage of their position in the Chamber to make personal gains." It said that no new elections had been held in 17 years, since the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem, and therefore the current board of directors is illegal. It should resign and call for new elections, the leaflet said. "In case the present board of directors refuses to dissolve itself" the leaflet continued, "... then the members of the general assembly will take the mission of executing the law of the Chamber of Commerce into their own hands and select a new board regardless of any harm or misfortune that may befall current board members." Za'rour, who owns a supply store in Jerusalem's Musrara area, told *Al Fajr*, "We have enough evidence to prove the current board of directors is not doing its duty." He said members of the Chamber are resisting his efforts by accusing him of doing all this for personal gains. He denied these charges and claimed that a number of "prominent" merchants support him in his crusade. Za'rour, however, refused to specify who these "prominent" people are.

The director of the Jerusalem Chamber of Commerce, Faiq Barakat, responded to the

charges by saying that the reason the Chamber has not held elections since 1967 is because the Jordanian government issued a special order immediately following Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem in 1967 which banned any change in the city's public or private institutions without Jordanian permission. The order was issued as an attempt to prevent an Israeli takeover of the city's Arab institutions or changing the status quo in the city.

Barakat said he was greatly disturbed by Za'rour's way of trying to change the current board. He described it as "undemocratic, using the law of the jungle." He said if Za'rour is honest about the whole thing then he should go to Amman and get permission from there to hold new elections. Otherwise, Barakat said, Za'rour will only be giving Israel an excuse to extend its control to the last of the few Palestinian institutions left in Jerusalem, which is exactly what Israel wants.

Other Jerusalem merchants agreed with Barakat's denunciation of Za'rour's tactics but conceded that the Chamber was not doing its job properly. One wholesaler said he would like to see the current board changed but only through democratic means in a way that would guarantee the election of qualified people.

Some merchants expressed anxiety that Za'rour's move may have unfavourable political implications for Palestinians and said Za'rour is acting by himself and does not enjoy the support he claims to have. They are afraid that changing the current board in an unorthodox way could destroy the Chamber and put an end to all its functions.

Since 1967 the Jerusalem

Chamber of Commerce has been functioning as a public office to serve the interests of the general Palestinian population in East Jerusalem. The Jordanian government permitted it to act as a government office because the city does not have an Arab municipality like other West Bank cities. According to Barakat, the Chamber handles at least 25 business applications, like passports, everyday. He said if it was not for the Chamber, people would have to travel to Amman every time they need some paper work done. The Chamber currently has more than 2000 members.

Barakat said heavy taxes imposed on Arab merchants by the Israeli government and the bad economic situation have drawn complaints from many merchants. But, he explained, the Chamber cannot do everything, nor can it fight the Israeli government single-handedly. He said his office has been trying its best to ease the economic hardships facing Palestinians but is hampered by the rapidly deteriorating economy.

In order to hold new elections, the current board should submit its resignation to the former governor of Jerusalem, Rawhi Khatib, who now lives in exile. Alternatively, two-thirds of the members should request that new elections be held. Za'rour said he can muster the two-thirds vote needed for new elections and that he would not need to go to court to bring down the current board. He has heard serious complaints from many merchants about corruption in the Chamber, he said, and therefore he expects all these people would support his efforts.

Calendar of Events

SCHEDULE OF CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS FOR ORTHODOX DENOMINATIONS

JANUARY 6, 1985

8:25 am. The Syrian Bishop arrives at Manger Square via Manger St.
10:45 am: The Patriarch's procession arrives at Manger Square. The Patriarch is received by the Governor, the Chief of Police. The

Mayor, members of the municipal council and other notables, who escort him to the entrance of the Church and take their leave.

3:30 pm. Latin Epiphany ceremony.
10:35 pm. Syrian Service.
10:40 pm. Coptic Service.
Midnight: Midnight Mass.

At the Nuzha/Hakawati Theatre Tel. 288189,

January 6, 7:00 pm. El-Hakawati presents an evening of theatre improvisation under the theme: "Failure". January 10, 7:00 pm, Film Night: Blue Collar directed by Paul Schneider.

Arson

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was never investigated by the authorities, nor were the necessary measures taken to protect the building, despite the district judge's requests for permanent guards to be stationed at the gates as they are at Jewish courts.

In addition to the legal files, legal case documents dating back to 1934, most of them irreplaceable, were also completely destroyed. Files of about 400 to 500 legal cases which are still pending were burned, and about 330 land dispute case files — of which 80 are pending — were also destroyed.

Speaking on behalf of the lawyers, Nabliu attorney Nidal Taha expressed deep concern that the destruction of all the files, especially the land dispute cases, would mean an escalation in land fraud. Many Palestinian residents who had to go to court to prove land possession would become subject once again to confiscation and theft attempts. In their efforts to take over Arab

land, the Israelis have in the past forged land deeds and sold the land without its owner's knowledge. It has also been reported that landowners have been beaten or conned into selling their land to dealers who work for Israeli companies.

According to the lawyers' statement, burning the legal files will benefit Israeli real estate companies because it will give them enough time to change facts on the ground before landowners can come up with new documents proving their ownership of the property. The statement said, "Many cases were decided against the companies and land dealers but have not yet been executed and there are many cases close to decision after several years of deliberations that will have to be considered from point zero once again."

The lawyers are demanding that a special judicial committee be formed composed of Palestinian lawyers with special privileges to allow it to restore the destroyed documents and protect the landowners from any possible land forgery.

The PNC

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elsewhere in the Arab world and are a natural phenomenon based on Palestinian experience.

PNC members of the Military Council, 29 in total, are the third block of members. They are appointed by the "Commander in Chief of the Palestinian Forces," currently Chairman Arafat.

All the tension which had accumulated through months of negotiations among Palestinian groups ended favourably in Amman when the quorum was met and even surpassed by eight additional members. To many, this was a victory for independent Palestinian will and decision-making. In a clear reference to those who tried to "hijack independent Palestinian decision-making, Shafiq al-Hout said in a fiery speech to the council that the PNC is its own master. "We elected Yasser Arafat as Chairman and we can dismiss him if we wish." It is not up to anyone else to do that, al-Hout said. Abu Iyad (Salah Khalaf) said in his speech to the council that he "regretted the absence of our dear brothers who were made not to attend." In another strong comment, Abu Iyad said, "Syria doesn't want the creation of an independent Palestinian state." He rejected Syrian accusations that the PLO had sold out the aims of the Palestinians, saying, "We wouldn't

be surrendering if we were to accept an independent Palestinian State [on the West Bank and Gaza]... we want a piece of our land so our people can live on it." In clear self-criticism, Abu Iyad said the PLO needs to evaluate its past acts. It is in need of serious reform.

There is always a first for everything. For Palestinians, it was a first to have the proceedings of their National Council carried to millions of Arabs and Jews all over the region. Reviews are apparently positive in the judgment of Palestinian democratic interaction.

If one agrees that "democracy" is a good form of government, then the practice of Palestinian legislators during the PNC — as attested by most who watched it — is a giant step forward. A wide range of PNC members participated and proposals by individual members were debated in a parliamentary fashion with the PNC by-laws always cited either in support of or against a particular point. At times some members who had used their right to speak but wanted still to comment on a particular point would manoeuvre in by claiming they had a point of order to state. When their intentions were revealed, they were asked to stop immediately. If these were to be considered part of "democratic attempts to use one extra shot at an issue, then it would still be within the scope of democratic practice. On the other hand, some argued that lack of familiarity with democratic practices was behind this behaviour; that is also possible.

The replacement of former PNC

President Khalid al-Fahum, was a case in point. Each PNC and its president are elected for a three year term. One of a three member-team called *The Office Of The Presidency*, the president is elected by the full PNC. Election is by majority vote. As the PNC president is also a PNC member, his removal then becomes protected by what some members call "diplomatic immunity." Although it was not a secret that Syria tried to abort the 17th PNC session and that Khalid al-Fahum was acting on Syria's behalf when he convinced other members to stay away, his removal from the position of PNC president took about an hour-and-a-half.

Article 73 of the "internal rules" regarding expulsion of members states the following: "Members may be expelled if any of these violations occur: a. If the member is absent from three consecutive sessions and fails to inform the PNC or provide a reasonable excuse; b. If the member worked for a non-Arab foreign power which may arouse some suspicion about his/her patriotism; and c. If he/she committed an act in violation of PLO by-laws."

A member found violating one of the above rules then has to go through a certain procedure before being officially expelled. Article 74 of the same list provides that a letter signed by five members be submitted to the PNC president, who in turn is to warn the member in question and debate his/her issue in the next session. Article 75 of the same list requires the PNC to form a special committee to discuss the case.

The committee then introduces its findings to the full PNC while the member in question is present. If a call vote taken in the member's absence yields a two-thirds majority, the expulsion is finalized.

Hence removing a member of the PNC is not an easy political move, especially since members want to follow the full procedure. The removal of Khalid al-Fahum was no exception. Some PNC members and Vice President Saleem Zaanoun felt obliged to follow the rules to the letter in al-Fahum's removal from his post. The debate was so intense, in fact, that Zaanoun excused himself from handling the session's proceedings. Since al-Fahum refused to attend the 17th session in Amman, a vote was held on removing him from the PNC presidency. 207 members supported the motion, 7 opposed it, and 11 abstained. With more than the required two-thirds the motion passed. Those foreign delegates and journalists who were able to follow the debate expressed their admiration for the way in which it was handled. It is worth noting that the PNC could not in fact expel Ahmad Jibril from the Congress, despite very strong opposition to his remaining a member.

The PNC reaffirmed the Arab nature of the Palestinian problem, but coupled with a clear-cut independence from all Arab governments' attempts to control the PLO. Most importantly, the PLO kept up its march towards democracy which some see as the road to Arab and Palestinian salvation.

WEEKLY REVIEW

December 19, 1984

MOLOTOV AT ISRAELI BUS

RAMALLAH — A molotov-cocktail was hurled at an Israeli bus near al-Am'ari refugee camp. Israeli forces searched the area.

TAX RAID ON SHOP

RAMALLAH — Tax employees raided a shop in Ramallah owned by the Rimawi family and fined the owner IS3 million.

REMAND OF GAZA YOUTH EXTENDED

TEL AVIV — Magistrate court in Tel Aviv extended the remand of a Gaza youth who works in Tel Aviv. The youth is suspected of throwing a hand grenade at an Israeli bus in Tel Aviv.

DHEISHEH RESIDENT SENTENCED

RAMALLAH — Israeli military court in Ramallah sentenced Mohammed 'Umar Abu Ya'qoub from Dheisheh to six months in jail and one-and-a-half-years suspended for membership in an illegal organisation.

FAQOU'AH YOUTHS SENTENCED

NABLUS — The Israeli military court in Nablus sentenced four youths from Faqou'ah village charged with possessing arms and membership in an illegal organisation: Mahmoud Hassan Salameh, seven years; Haytham Saleh, 5 years; Wajeh Abu Salameh, 3 years; and Saleh Abu Salameh, 3 years.

FAMILIES THREATENED WITH DEMOLITION

TAIBEH — Twenty-five families from the village of Taibeh in the Tulkarm District received warnings from Israeli military authorities that their houses may be demolished because they are unlicensed. The houses were built six years ago.

December 20, 1984

SETTLERS MARCH AGAINST DHEISHEH

DHEISHEH — About a thousand Jewish settlers belonging to Jewish terrorist groups participated in an anti-Palestinian provocative march staged by the settlers. The march started from Dheisheh and ended at Cremisan

monastery.

Four Israeli settlers were injured when the car they were travelling in was stoned by Dheisheh residents after the provocative march. The authorities imposed a curfew and declared Dheisheh area a military zone. The curfew was lifted in the evening.

IRRIGATION LINES DESTROYED

Vandals destroyed irrigation lines in the groves and farms belonging to Baqa al-Sharqieh village. Farmers expressed deep concern over the repeated vandalism.

JAIL SENTENCES

RAMALLAH — Israeli military court in Ramallah sentenced Nasir Ibrahim Ash-Shalabi and Hisham Abdel-Khaleq Abu Awwad to one month in prison and eleven months suspended. They were charged with possessing ammunition, demonstrating, and raising Palestinian flags.

Nasir Izzat Abu Hadbah was sentenced to three months in prison and 21 months suspended for not reporting information that Umar Suleiman Abu Awwad and Muhammed Abu Awwad, both under custody, had a bomb which they intended to plant under a bridge in a Ramallah area settlement. The above-named are from Turmus Ayya village.

DETENTIONS EXTENDED

JERUSALEM — Magistrate court in Jerusalem extended the remand of Fahim Musa Id from Kalandia and Tawfiq Mu'tasim Dawoud Abdeen. Both are accused of membership in illegal organisations.

ISRAELI CARS STONED

GALILEE — Five Israeli cars were stoned while passing near Majd al-Kroum village in Western Galilee. Police arrested four residents for investigation.

SETTLEMENT IN HEBRON'S CENTRE

HEBRON — Kiryat Arba' settlers made another attempt to construct a settlement in the centre of Hebron, in the Rumalidh area.

December 21, 1984

DURA RESIDENT JAILED

DURA — The Israeli military court in Ramallah sentenced Abd al-Fatah Shahin of Dura in the Hebron district to eight months

in prison and four months suspended on charges of membership in an illegal organisation.

December 23, 1984

GAZANS JAILED

JABALYA — The Gaza military court sentenced Omar Ahmad Abu Zaydeh to four years in prison and three years suspended; Abdullah Ahmad Nufal to 14 months in prison; and Abd al-Fatah Sharafi and Jamal Musa Sarhan to eight months in prison. The four are from Jabalya camp.

The court also sentenced Ali Abdallah al-Balbaisi to 21 months in prison and Majdi Mustafa Abdallah to eight months in prison.

December 24, 1984

NABLUS SHOPS ORDERED CLOSED

NABLUS — The Israeli military authorities decided to close four shops on Hittin Street in Nablus for three days after a number of youths threw stones at an Israeli patrol in the street.

December 25, 1984

ISRAELI CARS STONED

NABLUS — Israeli Radio reported that a number of people stoned an Israeli border police patrol on the main street in Nablus. Others stoned Israeli cars travelling on the main road near Jalazoun

ship in an illegal organisation and weapons training.

JERUSALEM DOCTOR JAILED

LYDDA — The Israeli military court in Lydda sentenced Dr Ahmad Bader Ragheb of Jerusalem to eight months in prison and five years suspended on charges of membership in Palestinian organisations.

Dr Ragheb was arrested October 14 upon his return from Romania where he studied medicine.

ABU HUSSEIN'S BROTHER DETAINED

UM AL-FAHM — Israeli police arrested teacher Yusef Abu Hussein of Um al-Fahm December 24 for political reasons. He is the brother of advocate Hussein Abu Hussein who was released from detention a few days ago.

December 26, 1984

AUTHORITIES CLOSE SWEIDIYEH

GAZA — Israeli military authorities closed the area of Sweidiyeh village located south of the Gaza beach. They prevented anyone from entering the village except for its residents.

YOUTHS JAILED

RAMALLAH — The Israeli military court in Ramallah sentenced Basel Abd al-Karim Mohammed Salameh of Turmusayyah to two months in prison and 12 months

convicted of selling Arab land to Israelis.

The military court in Amman had sentenced the 15 to death in absentia and ordered the confiscation of their property.

DEMOLITION FOR 169 FAMILIES

UJAH — About 169 families from the village of Ujah in the Jenin district recently received warnings from the authorities that their homes are threatened with demolition on the pretext that that they were "illegally constructed."

December 27

ARMY VEHICLE UNDER FIRE

YATTA — Israeli Radio said in a midnight report that an Israeli army vehicle came under light fire near the village of Yatta in the Hebron district. According to the report, a fire bomb was also thrown at the vehicle. No other details were available.

BETHLEHEM YOUTH JAILED

BETHLEHEM — The Israeli military court in Ramallah sentenced Shibli al-Qaisi of Bethlehem to one-and-a-half-years in prison and an equal suspended sentence on charges of membership in Palestinian organisations. Al-Qaisi has been in detention for four months.



Scouts and dignitaries in Manger Square welcome the Catholic Patriarch for the annual Christmas Eve march into Bethlehem. /AO photo.

camp. No one was injured. Israeli forces closed the areas and searched them.

YOUTH SENTENCED TO 3 YEARS

YA'ABAD — The Israeli military court in Nablus sentenced Mohammed Ali Amarnah of Ya'abad near Jenin to three years in prison on charges of member-

suspended on charges of cutting telephone lines connecting the Shilo settlement and the village, setting up roadblocks, and raising Palestinian flags.

15 SENTENCED TO DEATH FOR LAND SALES

AMMAN — The Jordanian government approved death sentences against 15 West Bank residents

DOCTOR SENTENCED

JAMA'IN — The Israeli military court in Nablus sentenced Dr Mohammed Ahmad Hamdan of the village of Jama'in near Nablus to four months in prison and eight months suspended on charges of membership in a Palestinian organisation. Hamdan has been in detention since October 16.

BALATTA MINORS JAILED, FINED

NABLUS — The Nabulus military court sentenced Abd al Fatah Amin Mansour, 15, of Balatta camp near Nabulus, to two-and-a-half months in prison and a \$500,000 fine; Nidal Mohammed Taha, 17, to two-and-a-half months in prison and a \$500,000 fine; and Khaled Abu Aika, 17, to 10 months in prison. The three minors were all charged with security offences.

2 YOUTHS ARRESTED FOR FLAGS

GOLAN HEIGHTS — Two 17-year-old Arab youths from the Golan Heights were arrested last week on charges of hoisting Palestinian and Syrian flags over public buildings in the Golan Heights, police said.

One of the youths is from the village of Majdal Shams, and the other from Masadah.

January 1, 1985

YOUTH SENTENCED

HIZMAH — The Israeli military court in Ramallah sentenced Yasser Ali al-Khatib, 18, from the village of Hizmah to the northeast of Jerusalem, to two-and-a-half years in prison and a similar suspended sentence on charges of membership in an illegal organisation.

UNIONIST PUT UNDER TOWN ARREST

HEBRON — The Israeli authorities summoned unionist Mahmoud Ziadah of Hebron and notified him that they have decided to renew his town arrest for another six months.



On the fortieth day after the death of Sharaf Taihi, a student at the Engineering College at Bir Ziet University, national figures spoke January 2 about the martyr who was killed in a demonstration December 21, the day before the PNC meetings convened. The speakers affirmed that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. AO/photo

TAKOA HOME BULLDOZED

Amidst tight security, Israeli bulldozers demolished the home of Ahmad Mohammed Khalil, a resident of the village of Takoa in the Bethlehem district on the pretext that it was illegally constructed.

This is the ninth time that the unionist is placed under town arrest.

by the Israelis on charges of throwing petrol bombs at Israeli vehicles passing near the camp, Israeli Radio reported.

The radio said Daoud Khashan was charged with throwing three petrol bombs at Israeli vehicles on the main Jerusalem-Ramallah road recently.

YOUTH DETAINED

A 16-year-old youth from Shu'fat camp has been detained

ILA should stop carrying out further exchange deals in the 'disputed' land.

But the lax stand of Israeli officials toward the ILA's violations of the court has encouraged the ILA to disregard the rights of the village population and to continue illegal exchange deals with both villagers and other Israeli land companies.

In answer to a letter sent by the local council in 1983 asking the Israeli

Lands Administration to cease exchange deals, the ILA claimed that about 93 dunums of Parcels Nos. One and Nine were registered in the name of the Hamnuta company dating from 1973. 'So,' Said said, 'the conspiracy has been secretly underway in an attempt to rob us of our land.' Most of the village population have not given in and have not accepted the exchange deals. They are determined not to let the ILA achieve its plan at their expense.

CURFEW ON RAMALLAH VILLAGES

RAMALLAH — Israeli troops imposed a curfew on the villages of Aboud and Deir Mish'el in the Ramallah district following an attempt to kill an Israeli truck driver near the village of Aboud.

Israeli Radio reported that the driver was wounded by four bullets in the stomach and taken to Hasharon hospital for treatment. The report said it was believed that an unknown assailant who was hiding on the new road to Aboud had shot at the driver and escaped.

48-Year-Old Land Battle

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Advocate Naqara discovered also that the ownership of Parcels Nos. One and Nine, whose area covers 659 dunums,

was changed in the Tabu office from the name of the High Commissioner directly to the name of the ILA. But on that occasion it was done in contravention of the court's order.

In 1980, this fraud was abolished by the court at the request of the local council, and the parcel was put back under the name of the High Commissioner. At the same time, Naqara conducted negotiations with the ILA legal representative, and both sides agreed that the

the world that comes from Ansar Jall travels in all rivers retreats to all rivers to lands of Palestine and Lebanon. On the artistic level, the poet is concerned with the unity of images and the unity of rhythm. He is not completely abandoning the traditional poetic music pattern but uses the smallest unit of rhythm. In the following piece the poet talks about the Palestinians in Sabra and Shatila after the massacre: "He did not bid farewell to Sabra, he did not bid farewell to Shatila; he carried the burned tree, the yeast, the homeland on his back and walked over the earth or melted in the stream. It is not a farewell or a meeting."

"The new grass said: this is our new camp. It rises early in the morning, waters gardens and streets. It brings iron and steel and satisfies the thirst of different races and colours."

"The stones said: the collective graves witness death and life. The human procession is overcrowded by feet and deep emotions."

"The windows and open doors said: they left. However, they will come back as the sea breeze, as the orange blossom's smell, as homemade bread, as the gifts of the feasts."

In this collection, Khalili uses three different poetry techniques as they fit various subjects. Sometimes he uses classic poetry which emphasises the unity of bayt (two stanzas of verse) and follows the traditional music pattern in rhythm and rhyme. Every bayt has its separate specific meaning, like a brick in a wall forming a whole. In this style

form and rhythm is emphasised more than imagery. It suits the use of speeches and direct language.

The second technique emphasises the unity of one rhythm by using and repeating the smallest rhythm unit. The rhyme is not visible in every stanza. Modern Arab poets began to use this technique since the 1940s, breaking the tradition of classical verse. This use sparked a battle between traditional and revolutionary poets. Modern poets believe that this style suits the political, economic and social changes in the Arab world; traditional poets believe the traditional patterns distinguish between poetry and prose.

The third technique which Khalili also uses breaks all verse rules by using prose more than verse. The well-known Syrian poet "Adonis" is the founder of "artistic prose" writing and wrote many masterpieces in this style. Khalili's use of artistic prose, however, confuses the reader. Images flow one after another in a stream of consciousness fashion, but they remain unconnected and incomplete. The reader does not always get a concise idea of the meaning of the text. The "key words" Khalili tries to provide do not always enable the reader to unlock the complete meaning of the poem, only part of it.

Khalili defended the use of artistic prose and said that "Arabs used to listen to poetry and not read it. Therefore the rhythm is an essential part of the poem." Khalili explained that the use of artistic prose is now widely used — and misused. Some poets without talent use this technique to write "sick dreams" that they themselves cannot interpret.

Poets like Adonis and Mohammed Maghout used this style to discover new writing forms. Khalili admitted that sometimes he loses the stream of the poem so it becomes ambiguous. However, he said, "I master all techniques. I do not use this style because I am lazy."

In the past, Khalili's prolific poetry has not been highly popular among the masses. When asked why, he explained: "Arabs understand poetry through their ears. They understand songs and not poems. The modern poem written in artistic prose is not widely read by either traditionally-raised intellectuals or people who receive education from cassettes and TV. The traditionally-educated intellectuals who supposedly play the educational linking role with masses reject this style in poetry. The establishment, on the other hand, rejects this poetry because it breaks old sacred rules and they refuse to introduce it into the curriculum."

Contrary to most poets, this Palestinian poet does not write about himself or his individual feelings. The "self" of the poet and his petty or great concerns are part of the general political, cultural, human dilemma resulting from the loss of Palestine. The personal tragedy the poet experiences is part of the general tragedy.

The collection *Wahdah Thum Fazadahem al-Hadiqa* depicts some details of the Palestinian struggle and talks about those who are scattered in different countries and dream about their own state. In spite of frustration, crime, and collective murder, there is a rose in quagmire of massacre.

A Rose in the Quagmire of Massacre

continued from page 11

"Sabra, Shatila,
I rise at dawn murdered
I distribute my flesh in clay
made of human bodies and announce its
neighing

Style

Khalili uses poetic language on different levels. On the visual level, you read his poems and you read them again as if you are gazing into a complicated expressionistic painting or as if the poet collects small islands of his imagination. There is no rhythm or rhyme but the language is visual, like that of sharp insight. It is difficult to comprehend the details of his verse but some key word, — like "settler" or "land" — helps somewhat to unravel his meaning and ideas. "People are equal in death like a cartridge of bullets, rocket launchers, military coffins in the awesome cemetery. They fall also at a time when all countries are drowning and live in old and new massacres."

When he uses direct language, his poems are like speeches, full of slogans. It is understandable: "O, the greatest river head of revolutions in

Al Fajr chronicles below some major local events affecting Palestinians in the occupied territories reported in the newspaper in the first half of 1984. A summary of events from July through December will be published in next week's paper.

1984 in Retrospect

January

- January 1, 1984 - A Jenin youth, Hashem Zeid Kilani, was shot dead by Israeli soldiers near Jalazoun refugee camp.
- January 2 - The Knesset confirmed a law facilitating private Israeli construction on land in the occupied territories.
- January 3 - The military objections committee issued an order *nial* preventing two Israeli development companies from registering ownership for 6448 dunums of lands in Obiedieh village, Bethlehem district.
- January 5 - Walid Hamdallah, the dismissed mayor of Anabta, was arrested on alleged involvement in the murder of a local land dealer. He spent 24 days in jail.
- January 5 - Unidentified persons set fire to a Baptist church in West Jerusalem.
- January 6 - Israeli authorities placed two Palestinian journalists, Musa Jaradat and Mohammed Amireh, under town arrest.
- January 8 - Israeli settlers smashed the windows of 10 cars belonging to Palestinians in Ramallah.
- January 9 - The Jordanian parliament was ordered to convene for the first time in nine years. It included West Bank as well as Jordanian delegates.
- January 10 - Israeli authorities demolished two unlicensed houses in Yatta, Hebron district.
- January 15 - A booby-trapped bomb exploded in a Russian Orthodox convent in Ain Karim, Jerusalem.
- January 20 - The Ramallah Women Teacher Training Centre and the Ramallah Men Teachers Centre were closed for eight days by UNRWA after disputes between administration and students.
- January 23 - Representatives of 31 mass and national institutions from the West Bank and Gaza Strip issued a statement rejecting Jordan's recent move to restore its parliament.
- January 25 - Palestinian poet Mu'in Bseiso died in London of a heart attack.
- January 27 - Palestinian guards at al-Aqsa Mosque prevented an attempt by an Israeli terrorist squad to place explosives inside the al-Aqsa Mosque compound.
- January 28 - A Palestinian youth, Nasser Adel Saris, was killed and two others were wounded when soldiers shot into a crowd of demonstrators in Nablus.

February

- February 2 - Israeli authorities ordered the old Bir Zeit University campus closed for three months after campus demonstrations January 31.
- February 5 - Israeli authorities ordered the sealing of three rooms in homes in Thouri, a Jerusalem suburb. Members of the families were charged with involvement in the murder of a settler in Hebron.
- February 5 - The General Committee of Government School Teachers (GGST) demanded a 100 percent pay increase to offset the decline in salaries in real value.

February 6 - A Bethlehem child, Nisreen Ahmad Sharouf, died and her two sisters were injured in a grenade blast near their home.

February 12 - A six-month town arrest order imposed on Amal Wahdan, an active unionist and member of the Women's Work Committee, was lifted after 2 months because of adverse international and local publicity.

February 12 - The Supreme Islamic Council sent a letter to the Israeli prime minister demanding that the government take necessary measures to protect al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem's Old City.

February 13 - The Israeli High Court rejected an appeal by Mayara Sayyed, an Acre political activist, to change the conditions of his six-month town arrest in order to allow him to continue university studies.

February 13 - A Tel-Aviv district court convicted a Fars'a prison guard of beating two Palestinians in detention at the camp.

February 14 - Unidentified men assaulted an 84-year-old Qalqilya man, Mohammed Saleh Nafal, and forced him to sign over land ownership documents.

February 22 - A student from Bir Zeit charged that security police in Nablus withheld medical care from him after he was shot in both legs.

February 23 - A student from Bir Zeit University, Walid Zaquat, was placed under town arrest for six months.

February 27 - 250 Palestinian prisoners on strike in Hebron appealed to international organizations to accelerate their support for prisoners in Hebron prison.

February 28 - A bomb at a Jaffa road shop in West Jerusalem exploded and wounded 21 Israelis.

February 29 - Town arrest and forced exile to Jericho was lifted for the elected mayor of Ramallah, Karim Khalaf.

March

- March 4 - An Israeli terror group wounded seven West Bank workers in a shooting ambush of a Ramallah area bus No. 201.
- March 8 - The nine-month-long work strike by women political prisoners at Neve Tertzza women's prison in Ramleh ended with the strikers promised better conditions.
- March 8 - Beit Jan villagers in the Galilee clashed with Israeli settlers over a road through their farmland. Two Palestinians were wounded.
- March 8 - Israeli authorities demolished 8 homes in Ain al-Beda in the north Jordan valley.
- March 10 - The Federation of Village Leagues was formally dissolved by Israeli authorities ending a five-year old Israeli scheme to organize locals into a collaborationist structure.
- March 10 - 12, Six booby-trapped bombs and grenades were discovered at UNRWA girls' schools in Ramallah and in the city's main square.
- March 11 - Soldiers shot and seriously wounded a 7-year-old child from Balatta refugee camp.

Majdi Abu Jama' being escorted alive after bus hijacking. On May 28 the Zorea Commission confirmed that two Palestinian guerrillas were killed by their captors.



March 14 - A Bethlehem merchant was found murdered in West Jerusalem

March 24 - A joint Palestinian-Israeli rally was held at Kibbutz Kerem Shalom to oppose the decision to expel exiled political prisoner Abdul Aziz Shain (Abu Ali).

March 25 - The fifth anniversary of the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty was marked by demonstrations and protests in the occupied territories.

March 27 - The mutilated body of Najah University student Bilal Jamal Najjar was found near Madal Bani Fadel village in Nablus district, three weeks after his disappearance. He had last been seen in detention in Nablus.

March 29 - A Beit Sahour secondary school was ordered closed indefinitely after a demonstration by school children.

March 29 - An Israeli policeman was brought to magistrate court in Tel Aviv on charges that he tortured a Palestinian teacher, Walid Arda.

March 30 - Father Fawzi Khouri, 37, pastor of the Greek Catholic Church in the village of Fassouta in the Galilee, was prevented from traveling abroad for six months.

March 30 - Five Palestinian youths were shot and wounded by Israeli troops during demonstrations throughout Palestine to mark the eighth anniversary of Land Day.

April

- April 2 - Israeli authorities ordered Bir Zeit University's new campus closed down for one month.
- April 3 - A Jerusalem teacher was denied the right to publish a Magazine.
- April 7 - The third general conference of the Druze Initiative Committee in the Galilee and Triangle affirmed solidarity with Palestinians.
- April 9 - Police arrested members of an alleged Israeli terror cell.
- April 9 - Aroub refugee camp entrances sealed.
- April 12 - Four Palestinian commandos hijacked an Israeli bus near Ashkelon. Israeli soldiers besieged the bus in Gaza, killed two of the hijackers and one passenger and wounded seven. The remaining two Palestinians were murdered by army and security guards after being taken prisoner. Homes of four were destroyed.
- April 17 - Prisoners' Day was marked by celebrations and festivals in unions, schools, clubs and universities throughout the occupied territories.
- April 23 - Two bombs in a park near Qalqilya wounded Israeli picnic-

ers and a police sapper.

April 27 - Booby-trapped mines discovered planted under six Arab owned buses parked in various suburbs of Jerusalem.

April 29 - Israeli newspaper *Hadashot* ordered shut for four days for violating censorship regulations by printing item about murder of Gaza hijackers who were taken prisoner.

May

- May 1 - A Palestinian resident in Gaza was blinded by Israeli an torturer.
- May 3 - Jordanian authorities released 46 political prisoners after mediation efforts by PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat.
- May 11 - Two Palestinian guerrillas killed in an armed clash with Israeli troops near Idna village in Hebron area.
- May 12 - Four *Al Fajr* employees were released after 20 hours of beating and interrogation.
- May 18 - A priceless exhibit of Palestinian cultural items in Bir Zeit University was destroyed by arson.
- May 23-25 - Members of Jewish terrorist underground were formally charged with murder, attempted murder, and various other crimes against Palestinians.
- May 28 - The Zorea Commission inquiry into the Gaza hijacking operation confirmed that the guerrillas were murdered by their captors.
- May 31 - The Israeli military governorate in the West Bank made public a new military order, no. 1108, which empowers military courts to sentence stone-throwers to up to 20 years in jail.

June

- June 7 - A Jordanian government-built hospital in Nablus was converted by Israeli military authorities into a central prison for 1000 political prisoners.
- June 11 - A Palestinian nationalist lawyer, Mousa Alami, 82, died in Jerusalem.
- June 22 - Israeli military authorities imposed a six-month town arrest on journalist Radwan Abu Ayyash.
- June 28 - Israel released 312 Syrians for 6 of its own soldiers in a POW exchange.
- June 28 - The fourth round of the intra-Palestinian dialogue ended in Aden with Fatah and Democratic Alliance factions initiating an agreement on political and organizational reform within the PLO.
- June 28-July 3 - Seven West Bankers were placed under town arrest orders.